

DIPLOMACY REVEALED.

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## DEDICATION.

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TO THE YOUNG MEN  
IN THE  
LABOUR AND SOCIALIST MOVEMENT  
WHO ARE ACTING AS  
INTELLECTUAL TORCH-BEARERS  
TO THEIR FELLOWS.

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## KEY.

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THE Despatches from the Belgian diplomatists in Paris, London and Berlin are divided into *Parts*—each *Part* covering a specific year, or years. Each *Part* is preceded by a summary of the principal matters dealt with in the Despatches. This is followed by a *Chronology* of the chief events of the year, or years, treated in the *Part*. The object of the *Chronology* is to provide a kind of textbook to the Despatches, and to assist in a more comprehensive survey of international events than is possible from a perusal of the Despatches themselves. It will be observed that the *Chronology* often records events of which the writers of the Despatches were necessarily ignorant.

The Despatches are copiously annotated by explanatory *Notes*, in order to facilitate an intelligent perusal of the Despatches in the light of precedent, contemporary and subsequent events. To avoid giving the reader unnecessary trouble, the *Notes* are published together at the end of each *Part*; and there are cross-references when the same subject crops up again, as is frequently the case in the Despatches.

As here presented, the Despatches, the Chronologies and the Explanatory Foot-Notes form a fairly complete chapter of the most important events and tendencies in the diplomatic history of Europe from 1905 until the outbreak of war.

## FOREWORD.

BY THE AUTHOR.

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I AM more than ever persuaded that the most vital interest of the British people is the destruction of the autocracy of the Executive over the nation's policy.

Foreign policy holds the keys of war and peace, life and death for the nation and for the individuals composing it. While the country lives in the shadow of potential war, of preparation for war and expenditure on such preparation, no permanent improvement in the social condition of the people is possible: no better order can be evolved.

While the country is in the position of being unable to control its foreign policy, the destinies of the people are at the mercy of the Cabinet and of individual Ministers in the Cabinet. Foreign policy is framed without any regard to the wishes of the people. The people are simply not taken into account. They have to abide by decisions with the framing of which they had absolutely nothing to do. In the most important branch of its executive functions—the control and direction of foreign policy—the Government of this country is no more democratic than was the Government of the Tsar or the Government of Germany under the present regime.

This is literally true.

It is mysterious that a self-respecting people should tolerate such a condition of affairs. The only conceivable explanation is that they have not yet fully grasped the facts.

I remain unrepentant in my belief that in studying the secret history of the ten years which preceded the "World War," as Colonel Repington calls the catastrophe,

of 1914, the British people are studying not the past but the future of their country. I remain unshaken in my conviction that if they do not familiarise themselves with that history, and come to certain decisions in consequence, we shall experience a Second World War within the lifetime of this generation.

The working agreement between the two chief political parties to co-operate in retaining executive autocracy over foreign policy has been the most fatal event in our contemporary history. On the pretext of withdrawing foreign policy from party politics, foreign affairs have been withdrawn almost entirely from the arena of public debates. An intelligent and informed Opposition on foreign policy has totally disappeared, both in Parliament and Press. This is a national calamity.

It has been aggravated by the circumstances determining the long course of secret policy which eventually brought Britain into the war, and which contributed to the war itself. These were of such a character as to destroy effective opposition, or even constructive criticism upon the political aims of the war, from any quarter at any period of the war's duration. In this respect the nation has been the victim of those very party politics whose elimination from foreign policy is reputed a national safeguard. For effective criticism was not to be anticipated from Unionist quarters. It could only have emanated from the Liberal side, and Liberal politicians and publicists could only have expressed it at the expense of party loyalty.

Up to the very last few hours preceding Britain's entry into the war, Liberal newspapers representing the Left Wing of the party—the Wing which won the elections of 1905, but which threw away its victory when it allowed the most important departments of Government to be handed over to the Liberal imperialists—and eminent personalities in the Liberal world, were vehemently denying that their party chiefs had committed acts which they described as "treason to the people": only to find themselves confounded in the end by those chiefs' avowals.

The issue then became one of principles earnestly and vociferously upheld for years, or loyalty to party chiefs—i.e., to party. It was decided in favour of party. The condition of the Liberal Party to-day is the direct and inevitable result of the choice. That condition is set down

to every reason but the true one—abandonment of principle.

But that is a small matter, nationally speaking. The really serious upshot of the decision which was then taken and adhered to is that the country has been prevented from appreciating the frightful dangers which threaten it from the autocracy of the Government in foreign policy. For the overwhelming military success of the war on the one hand, and the split between the Liberal Party chiefs on the other, have combined to stabilise the conditions under which our foreign policy was conducted from 1905 to 1914. There has resulted a conspiracy of circumstance to withhold the truth from the people in regard to the diplomacy of the *pre-war* period. Why trouble? Has not the war been won? "Victory" is a great whitewash.

The hope lies with the new forces which are advancing to the conquest of political power from below.

My object in translating and annotating these *pre-war* Belgian diplomatic despatches has been that the leaders of Labour, but, above all, the young men in the Labour and Socialist movement who are acting as intellectual torch-bearers to their fellow-workers, may be helped by their perusal to realise the kind of system which, so long as it prevails, will block Labour's advance.

The same influences which were at work in our country in the ten years preceding the "First World War" are at work to-day preparing for the next one. Their power is undiminished. Their capacity for mischief is, if possible, greater. The people are as helpless to-day in their grip as they were before the war.

From that grip the people can only free themselves if they fully understand its nature.

Such books as Lord Fisher's "Memories," Colonel Repington's "The First World-War," Mr. Wilfred Scawen Blunt's "Diaries" are invaluable—but expensive.

In this volume, at a moderate price, the reader will be able to follow, step by step, the unfolding of the plots and counter-plots which finally culminated in the tragedy of August, 1914.

The writers of these despatches were the diplomatic representatives of a small Power. It was ostensibly to save the independence of that same small Power that we went to war. I know of no diplomatic documents on the

secret diplomatic history of the *pre-war* years which reveal with such blinding light how remote were the ostensible causes of the war from the real causes; or which show so clearly that Belgium was a mere pawn in a great game—of importance only because, as Lord Loreburn puts it, she was the strategic “corridor” into France.

It was a fine and chivalrous impulse which caused very many of our young men to join up in the opening weeks of the war: to fling themselves into the “great adventure” on behalf of a weak nation trampled underfoot. Could the latent forces from which that impulse sprung be enlisted in a sustained moral and intellectual assault upon Secret Diplomacy, that deadly enemy of all peoples, great and small, humanity would be permanently benefited.

I desire to place on record my warm thanks to Mrs. Bowen-Wedgwood for the invaluable assistance she has given me in the compilation of this volume.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE DESPATCHES.

BY THE AUTHOR.

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THE writers of these despatches were the diplomatic representatives of Belgium accredited to Britain, France and Germany before the war. The reports are addressed to their official chief, the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs in Brussels. The documents were discovered in the Belgian archives by the Germans in 1915, and issued in the original French with a German translation. No attempt has ever been made to dispute their authenticity, which has been accepted by British, French, American and Italian commentators, as well as by writers whose countries preserved neutrality in the war. Their value to the student of international affairs, to all those who realise that the perils of the moment and the menace of the future can only be conjured through a clear comprehension of the past, is immeasurable.<sup>1</sup>

The principal writers are Count Charles de Lalaing, Belgian Minister in London; Baron Guillaume, Belgian Minister in Paris; Baron Beyens, Belgian Minister in Paris; and Baron Greindl, Belgian Minister in Berlin. All these men had been in the Belgian Diplomatic Service for many years, and had served their country in many lands. Beyens had been successively chief of the

<sup>1</sup> It will be observed that there are gaps in the Despatches. This has naturally led to the suggestion that the missing Despatches have been purposely omitted from the published collection. Were that the case it could only be attributed to the desire of suppressing criticism of German diplomacy, or adverse comments upon German policy. But the inference of deliberate suppression would seem to be untenable, because when the Despatches are resumed after a gap it will be observed that the general tone of the documents differs in no way from the general tone of those immediately preceding the break in continuity. We may assume, therefore, that the simple explanation is probably the correct one, viz., that the missing documents were accidentally or designedly destroyed before they fell into German hands.

political department in the Belgian Foreign Office (1909), chief of the King's private Cabinet, and Minister attached to the Court (1910).

The despatches may be said to cover two periods: the period of the protracted struggle over Morocco which, in its active and latent stages, lasted from the autumn of 1904 to the conclusion of the Franco-German Convention in November, 1911; and the period which began with the attempts to improve Anglo-German relations, dating from the conclusion of that Convention to the murder of the Austrian heir-apparent through the agency of the Serbian "Black Hand" Society, in June, 1914.

For the past nine years—1911 to the present time—I have been pointing out that this struggle over the disposal of Morocco was an epoch-making event in modern history, not because of its intrinsic importance, but because of the consequences involved in it and the effects to which it gave rise. My view is amply corroborated in these despatches. Long before they saw the light I endeavoured, in a series of articles in the *Nineteenth Century and After* and in the *Nation*, and in many letters to the *Daily News* and other newspapers, and subsequently in a volume published two years before the war,<sup>2</sup> to arouse my countrymen to the enormous significance of the Morocco dispute for Anglo-German relations and for the peace of the world.

I wrote then without proofs, but suspecting that the attitude of the British Government towards the actions of France in Morocco was so extraordinary that it could only be explained by the existence of a *secret understanding with France concealed from the British people and committing us to naval and military support of France*. As France was bound to Russia by a political and military alliance, any secret commitments to France would involve us in contingent liabilities to Tsarist Russia, whose actions were ever irresponsible and incalculable, and whose imperialist ambitions were illimitable. This prospect filled me with deep concern, and in the years which immediately preceded the war I neglected no opportunity which presented itself of drawing public attention to the dangers of the situation arising out of a secret diplomacy which took no account of the vital

<sup>2</sup> "Morocco in Diplomacy" (Smith, Elder & Co., 1912), and later republished as "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy" (National Labour Press, six large editions)

interests of the British nation, and which made of our foreign policy the most disturbing element in Europe, as these despatches testify.

These efforts met with general support from British Liberals and from Liberal newspapers. But the repeated denials of Mr. Asquith and Sir E. Grey in the House of Commons that any such secret commitments existed, combined with a lessening of acuteness in the naval controversy with Germany, the Haldane Mission to Berlin, the proof of hearty Anglo-German co-operation throughout the series of crises raised by the Balkan wars, and the well-founded belief that an arrangement was being negotiated with Germany over colonial matters, lulled the country into a sense of false security.

The opening of the fatal year found surface relations between Britain and Germany better than at any moment since the outbreak of the first Morocco crisis ten years before. When the crash came in August, British Liberals were suddenly confronted with the fact that they had been living in a fools' paradise, and that the declarations of their trusted leaders as to the freedom of the country from diplomatic, military and naval entanglements had been untrue in substance, if not in form. But after one gasp of horrified amazement and indignant protest they condoned the betrayal of the people, and sought consolation in a self-deception which attributed altruistic motives to a war that, but for the train of circumstances set up by those secret and unavowed commitments, would probably never have taken place.<sup>3</sup> For I contend that no man who studies the events of the ten years preceding the war in the light of all that is now disclosed, and with the sole desire of arriving at the truth [whatever his views may be as to the responsibility of the Teutonic Powers in the last three weeks of the crisis], can believe that the Tsar and his Ministers would have pursued with such conscious and sustained deliberation their preparations for a Balkan explosion, or could have counted so entirely upon the "revanche" elements in France, fortified by an eight years' intimate collaboration with the British military and naval staffs, unless they had felt assured that the British Foreign Office was too deeply committed to draw back when Tsardom decided the opportune moment had come to force the issue.

<sup>3</sup> This is also Lord Loreburn's published opinion.

With the help of these Belgian diplomatic despatches we can now see the Morocco question in its true perspective: not as an isolated incident, but as the culmination of an old, and the starting point of a new, policy which, by a series of inevitable steps, was to lead the world into a gigantic war whose ultimate consequences to the British State no man can foretell. The Unionist Cabinet handed Morocco to France in 1904 in order to purchase French agreement to the perpetuation of our occupation of Egypt in defiance of our reiterated pledges to the Egyptian people. *It concealed from the people the fact that it had done so.* That was the first wrong inflicted upon the British nation. The Unionist Cabinet acted in the way it did knowing full well that acute friction with Germany was bound to follow. The future of Morocco was not a matter which the British and French Governments could treat as a *national* issue between them without international trouble of the gravest kind. It was an *international* issue, and had been so recognised by an International Convention to which Britain, France and Germany were signatories. Germany had a treaty with Morocco, kept a diplomatic representative at the Moorish capital, possessed considerable and growing commercial interests in the country, and had co-operated for many years with Britain in resisting French efforts to secure a privileged position within it. How could Germany, or any other great Power under similar circumstances, have acquiesced in such a transaction, especially in an era when the policy of industrially expanding European States was increasingly governed by the hunt for external markets? Germany's chief national need was free external markets. The secret arrangements connected with this Morocco deal made of Morocco a French economic monopoly. Diplomatic secrets are seldom kept. The Unionist Cabinet must have anticipated that this secret would not be kept. It could have had no illusion as to the effect of the disclosure upon Germany. The policy, then, was deliberate, although its full consequences may not have been foreseen. To retain Egypt we ran the risk of a breach with Germany ourselves and we set France and Germany by the ears. To retain Egypt! And to-day, sixteen years later, Egypt repudiates us! We have to hold her down by main force! We talk seriously of granting her independence! What prescience, what statesmanship—to pitch a flaming torch into the

powder magazine of European rivalries in order to buy off a rival to an occupation which we now find is impracticable!

And that decision, taken in 1904 in secret, has cursed our foreign policy ever since. When Germany discovered the facts she challenged the deal and demanded a new International Conference. All the old Franco-German animosities flamed into new life. These Belgian despatches contend that British diplomacy laboured to exacerbate them. Anglo-German relations became poisoned. The Unionist Cabinet prepared to support the deal by force of arms—the deal of which the British people were in ignorance! The fleet was concentrated in the North Sea. The *Dreadnought* era was inaugurated. Lord Fisher, the First Sea Lord, began his preparations for the "great task" of a "German war," which included the "Copenhagening" of the German Fleet.<sup>4</sup> The Civil Lord of the Admiralty boasted that by the new disposition of the British fleet Britain could strike the first blow even before war was declared.<sup>5</sup> Preparations for the despatch of an expeditionary force were talked of, and M. Deleassé, the French Foreign Minister, endeavoured to lead his colleagues along his own extreme path by boasting of positive assurances of British military and naval support. *And all this arising out of a secret deal giving to France what was not ours to give in order that France might agree that we should keep what was not ours to retain.* Thus are the destinies of a people made the sport of fools in office, and its patriotism invoked in the most disreputable and futile of political and strategic combinations.

The Unionist Government disappeared. The Liberals came in, declaiming of peace, retrenchment and reform. Hardly had they taken office when a section of the Cabinet determined, *without the knowledge of the other section, let alone Parliament or the country, to base the country's entire foreign policy on the successful accomplishment of this deal, which continued to be unknown to the people.*<sup>6</sup> The military editor of a London newspaper, the French military *attaché*, the chairman of the "Committee of Imperial Defence, flit hither and thither

<sup>4</sup> See Fisher's "Memories."

<sup>5</sup> February 2, 1905.

<sup>6</sup> See "How the War Came," by Lord Loreburn.

behind the scenes, their personalities, their very names, unknown to the so-called Democracy whose fate they determine.<sup>7</sup> "Conversations" were also begun with the Belgian military authorities through the intermediary of the British military *attaché* in Brussels. Preparations for war with Germany received an enormous impetus by official sanction being given to regular collaboration between the military and naval staffs of the two countries.

Thenceforth the Anglo-French military and naval staffs continued uninterruptedly in conference, gradually enmeshing our people in obligations which, when the fatal hour had struck, were to be called "of honour." *And the people knew nothing of them!* Neither were they informed when, later, a political, and equally secret, agreement clinched the military and naval "conversations" !

The Liberal Government went to Algeciras and then, with this still secret deal in its possession, signed a new international Covenant based upon the independence and integrity of Morocco, which its partner in the deal began at once the task of infringing! Five years passed. France employed them in the process of gradually absorbing her Morocco meal. Outwardly the Morocco question slumbered. Below the surface its effects followed their inevitable course. For, dating from the beginning of the military and naval collaboration, the intrinsic character of the Morocco dispute became absorbed in the greater issue it had created, viz., *Anglo-French continuous preparations for war with Germany*. Between the British people and their Government lay the shadow of the unrevealed. Between the British and German people suspicion grew, misunderstandings multiplied. Mutual fears were given a free rein. The German Government learned of Sir John Fisher's "Copenhagening" policy. Naval rivalry had become intensified by the *Dreadnought* initiative.<sup>8</sup> The Germans were genuinely alarmed. Fisher

<sup>7</sup> See Repington's "The First World-War."

<sup>8</sup> Mr. Lloyd George, speaking at the Queen's Hall on July 28, 1908, said: "I want to put two considerations to you from the German point of view. . . . Men have not got the imagination to project themselves into the position of the other party. Now just consider for a moment. You say 'Why should Germany be frightened of us? Why should she build because of us?' Let me put two considerations to you. We started it; it is not they who have started. We had an overwhelming preponderance at

boasts of it in his "Memoirs": "The Germans are not building in this feverish haste to fight you! No! it's the daily dread they have of a second Copenhagen, which they know a Pitt or a Bismarck would execute on them. Cease building or I strike." Talk of Prussian intolerance! There was panic on both sides. Yet Britain could display an avenue of 18 miles of ships before the admiring gaze of the Tsar of all the Russias (1909). For our secret co-partnership with France in war preparations, arising out of the secret Morocco deal, had been gradually drawing us within the tentacles of the Russian octopus, as was bound to be the case.

The secret deal was to be again threatened before its final accomplishment. The French opined that the time had come to give the *coup de grâce* to Moorish independence. Thirty thousand troops converged on Fez, the capital, hastening to the rescue of Europeans who did not require rescuing.<sup>9</sup> They would leave, the assurance was given, directly the work of rescue had been completed.

sea which could have secured us against any conceivable enemy. We were not satisfied. We said: 'Let there be Dreadnoughts.' . . . Well, let me put another consideration before you which I don't think is sufficiently pointed out. We always say we must have what we call a 'two-Power Standard.' What does that mean? You must have a Navy large enough to oppose a combination of any two naval Powers. So, if we had Russia and France, Germany and Italy, we should always have a Fleet large enough to defend our shores against any combination of the two greatest naval Powers in Europe. This has been our standard Look at the position of Germany. Her Army is to her what our Navy is to us—her sole defence against invasion. She has not a two-Power standard. She may have a stronger Army than France, than Russia, than Italy, than Austria, but she is between two great Powers, who, in combination, could pour in a vastly greater number of troops than she has. Don't forget that, when you wonder why Germany is frightened at alliances and understandings and some sort of mysterious workings which appear in the Press, and hints in the *Times* and *Daily Mail*. . . Here is Germany in the middle of Europe, with France and Russia on either side, and with a combination of armies greater than hers. Suppose we had had a possible combination which would lay us open to invasion—suppose Germany and France, or Germany and Austria, had Fleets which, in combination, would be stronger than ours. Would we not be frightened; would we not build; would we not arm? Of course we should. I want our friends, who think that because Germany is a little frightened she really means mischief to us, to remember that she is frightened for a reason which would frighten us under the same circumstances."

<sup>9</sup> See Note 25, Part VI. of the Despatches.

They remained. Once more Germany challenged the issue. Once again the three peoples were flung into the cockpit of violent and confused controversy. Once again the "German war" loomed in the offing.<sup>10</sup> Naval and military steps were taken. Mr. Lloyd George, in a new rôle, made an incendiary speech at the Guildhall from a half sheet of notepaper supplied by the Foreign Office. Europe hovered on the brink of war. Finally Morocco disappeared down the French gullet, and Germany, barely saving her face with "compensation" provided in African jungles, nursed her wounded pride in furious dudgeon. The Great War had advanced another stride towards its consummation.

The unfolding of this story, or as much of it as was diplomatically accessible in those years, can be followed in the Belgian despatches from 1905 to 1910-11. That is why the historic interest of these documents for the British people is so considerable. Their most notable characteristic is the severity with which British diplomacy is judged; and especially the personal diplomacy of Edward VII. Yet these documents emanated from the official representatives of a small country which, in the event of a European war, had at least as much reason to fear Germany as they had to fear France: for German military strategy in a general war between the two great European rival Groups of Powers was a matter of common public discussion among military experts. Is their attitude to be explained by mere bias against Britain? The reader must draw his own conclusions. But two facts will not escape his notice. The first is the danger which the writers apprehend for *Belgium* should war eventuate. This fear is implicit and often vocal throughout the despatches. That is their constant anxiety and *they criticise our diplomacy mainly because they feel that it is tending to make the war which they dread for their country*. This is a very important point. The second is the persistence and unanimity with which the

<sup>10</sup> Mr. Winston Churchill, speaking at Dundee on June 5, 1915, declared that "he was sent to the Admiralty in 1911 after the Agadir crisis had nearly brought us into war, and he was sent with the express duty laid upon him by the Prime Minister to put the Fleet in a state of instant and constant readiness for war in case we were attacked by Germany." Germany was not in a position to attack us. Our naval force was overwhelmingly superior in every respect. (See Fisher's "Memoirs.")

writers insinuate that if left to themselves France and Germany would reach a settlement of their differences, and that British diplomacy was being continually exercised to envenom the controversy and to draw a circle of hostile alliances round Germany.<sup>11</sup> This judgment is totally at variance with the ordinary British view. Our diplomacy assumes, in these despatches, the most sinister of aspects. For that very reason it deserves careful examination, especially in the light of the knowledge since acquired, that *the springs which moved British diplomatic action in the course of these seven years were carefully concealed from the British people, whose own judgment of passing events was necessarily, on that account, a judgment formed upon inaccurate premises due to lack of information.* Here was no question of "My country, right or wrong." "My country" was plunging and tossing in a trough of error. We moved throughout that period in the shackles of ignorance.

And there is another fact to be taken into account in considering whether the condemnation of British diplomacy by these Belgian diplomatists can be written off as simple anti-British prejudice. I refer to the high tribute paid to the British Ambassador in despatches 31 and 50. This suggests that British policy rather than Britain herself is the object of hostile criticism. Whatever view may be taken of the justice of this criticism, most people will be prepared to admit that a country is ill-served by a diplomacy which can *appear* in neutral eyes to be such as interpreted in these despatches, written by different men in different capitals of Europe *over a long course of years.*

The second period covered by the despatches opens with the revulsion of feeling widely caused in Britain by the narrow escape from war over Morocco, coupled with disgust at the disclosure of the secret deal.

For the British Democracy had learned—through the indiscretion of two Parisian newspapers<sup>12</sup>—and for the first time, of the Secret Articles attached to the Anglo-French

<sup>11</sup> The "encirclement" of Germany was not originally a German expression, but a French one. French military and Chauvinist writers continually used the term since the Anglo-French "entente" in 1904. It is actually the title of a volume published in 1913 by Commandant de Civrieux. "Le Germanisme Encerclé" (Lavauzelle).

<sup>12</sup> November, 1911.

Convention of 1904 and of their complement, the Franco-Spanish Convention. The initial secret deal was secret no longer, and men of goodwill and sober judgment were free to reflect upon the injuries inflicted upon the British people and upon the world by the tortuous and dishonest diplomacy of a section of the Liberal Cabinet—a section which included the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary. *But they were still in the dark.* They fondly imagined that all secret dealings were now disposed of, that the slate was clean, that Britain, free and uncommitted, could labour henceforth to remove the misunderstanding with Germany, and use her influence for international peace. For the international sky was heavily overcast. A seven years' estrangement between the two most powerful peoples in Europe had played havoc with international relations. International morality was seldom at so low an ebb. "Never," declares a writer in the *Fortnightly Review*, "has there been such a holocaust of treaties." Following the violation of the Act of Algieras by France, with British concurrence and support, had come the violation of the Berlin Treaty by Austria in the matter of the Bosnian annexation, and by Bulgaria in denouncing Turkish suzerainty; to be followed in turn by the violation of the integrity of Persia guaranteed by the Anglo-Russian Agreement, in which the Liberal Cabinet was seen to be playing the same part towards the Russia of the Tsars as it played towards France in Morocco—but this time with no one to oppose; and by the violation of the Berlin Treaty by Italy in her unprovoked descent upon Tripoli—upshot of secret bargains with France and Russia [afterwards to be revealed], and with the almost certain connivance of the British Foreign Office although up to the present the evidence on that point is presumptive only.

But that the breach with Germany must be healed was the determined purpose of Liberalism in Britain. The forces of progress moved forward steadily to that end, and with sufficient driving force to drag the Liberal Government along with them. *But they moved forward blindly.* Their belief in the absence of continental entanglements was erroneous. Their faith in the declarations of the leaders of the Liberal Party in that respect was misplaced. Morocco had vanished from the international horizon. *But its legacy remained in the shape of a military and naval collaboration; in the making*

*of plans with one Power for war against another, involving dispositions for concerted action elaborated in the minutest details, involving a redistribution of fleets which amounted to a revolution in accepted British naval strategy, involving the increase and perfecting of a large force for operations on the Continent of Europe, which steps, in combination, had bound us by a thousand threads, invisible to the public, but of the consistency of steel bands, to France—and not to France alone. Of these secret commitments—direct product of the secret Morocco-Egyptian deal negotiated by the Unionist Cabinet in 1904 and endorsed by a section of the Liberal Cabinet in 1906—the people of Britain were in profound ignorance. Political Liberalism and political Labour were equally in ignorance. Even many Ministers in the Liberal Government were not informed.<sup>13</sup>*

*These liabilities hung like a millstone round the necks of those who laboured for international peace. Some strides were made along the road, but they were halting. Efforts which no doubt were genuine enough were put forward by the Liberal Government to reach an accommodation; but they were genuine only within the limits of an unavowed relationship with France and Russia.*

*And now the colossus of the North began to move. Tsarist Russia had determined to force the Balkan issue and to reach the long coveted goal—Constantinople and the Straits. It was its only chance of survival, for its feet were of clay. Revolution thundered at its gates. Throughout the autumn and winter of 1913 the internal situation of Russia grew steadily in gravity. The prestige of the Court and army had never recovered from the blow inflicted by Japan. The sole hope of Tsardom was a successful war which should restore its moral ascendancy and swamp popular discontent through a military triumph crowned by the halo of mystical romanticism that should surround the Tsar as he entered the portals of St. Sophia. For Tsardom the times spelt Constantinople or collapse.*

<sup>13</sup> Lord Loreburn's "How the War Came" may be usefully consulted. It will, of course, be remembered that many—as many as seven, I believe—members of the Government resigned when Sir E. Grey disclosed to the House his long-withheld secret political, military and naval arrangements with France, and that Lord Morley, Mr. John Burns and Mr. Charles Trevelyan persisted in their resignations, which the invasion of Belgium by the German armies caused the others to withdraw.

And to reach Constantinople the Tsardom must have Austria and her partner Germany beneath its feet. For the rôles had changed. It was no longer the Anglo-Saxon who blocked the path to a secular ambition which had now become a question of life and death to the Muscovite autocracy: but the Teuton. Indeed there was a chance that the Anglo-Saxon might be won over to assist, through the medium of France. To that end Tsardom directed its incessant efforts, using as its chief weapon Isvolsky, Russian Ambassador in Paris, who was on terms of great personal intimacy with Poincaré, President of the French Republic, and with Tittoni, the astute ex-Foreign Minister of Italy, Italian Ambassador in Paris.

Thus these two short years of effort to reconstruct a bridge between Britain and Germany were vitiated by the gradually tightening chains in which British diplomacy had entangled itself since the secret Morocco deal. Those chains were henceforth to be duplicated. French foreign policy was in the hands of men ripe for war: Nationalists filled with the revived passions of a national humiliation nearly half a century old. The Belgian despatches leave no room for doubt on that score. These men—Poincaré, Millerand, Delcassé—were confident that those in whose hands real power rests in Britain were with them, supported as the latter were by the leaders of the Opposition and by the entire Unionist Press. The army chiefs and the heads of the Admiralty they knew were with them. The plan of campaign had been prepared so minutely as to include arrangements for the refreshment of an Expeditionary Force along the road to its appointed stations! Between France and Tsarist Russia there was forged a bond of no uncertain character. It was a formal alliance in peace and war. The wires were set working. British diplomacy had been steadily drawing nearer to Tsarist Russia for years past—ever since our Foreign Office bartered Egypt against Morocco.

A tremendous struggle, totally unseen and unsuspected by the British people, raged from July, 1912, to April, 1914. It was a struggle waged by Tsardom and official France for the capture of the British Foreign Office—for the person of the Foreign Secretary primarily, because the bulk of the permanent staff were pro-Russian, pro-French and anti-German, and barely disguised their sentiment. The British Embassy in Paris had become

equally anti-German since the retirement of Sir Frank Lascelles. Should the improvement in Anglo-German relations become permanent there was grave risk that if matters in the Balkans were pushed to the issue the Franco-Russian combination must face the Teutonic Powers alone. France might even draw back at the last moment. For Jaurés was a great influence steadily directed against the French people becoming the catspaw of Tsarist ambition and the victims of the megalomania of those in power at the Elysée and Quai d'Orsay. For Petrograd this meant the postponement of schemes on whose execution the fate of Tsardom depended. So the net must be drawn tighter and tighter. It closed with the Conference in Paris of April 24 (1914), when Sir Edward Grey, in the company of M. Doumergue (the French Premier) and M. Paul Cambon (French Ambassador in London), consented to graft upon the eight-year-old secret collaboration between the heads of the British and French armies and navies, collaboration between the British and Russian Admiralties. The jubilation of Russia's Foreign Minister is shown in his communication to the Tsar found in the Russian archives by the Revolutionary Government, and in the triumphant note in the organ of the French Foreign Office, *Le Temps*.

The Russian naval agents in London began their discussion of the plan for invading Pomerania, so dear to Lord Fisher,<sup>14</sup> the despatch of transports to the Baltic, and so on. A complete mobilisation of all the Russian reserves of the three annual contingents of 1907, 1908 and 1909 was ordered for the whole Empire under the form of "exercises" (May). On June 13 the Petrograd *Bourse Gazette*, the organ of the Minister of War, came out with its famous announcement: "Russia is ready: France must be ready." A fortnight later the Serbian "Black Hand," in the closest touch with M. de Hartwig, Russian Minister at Belgrade, and probably subsidised by him, crowned its long list of murders and terrorist acts by executing its long matured and planned assassination of the Archduke Francis Joseph.

The hour had struck.

Thus was the "peace of Great Britain left at the mercy of the Russian Court," and the British people went

<sup>14</sup> "Memories," *op. cit.*

to war "in a Russian quarrel" because they "were tied to France in the dark."<sup>15</sup>

Trace out the story in these despatches of the Belgian diplomatists, and you will find that the genesis of that happening lay—as the present writer has contended since August, 1914—in the secret bargain which sought to consolidate the British position in Egypt, contrary to reiterated national pledges, by handing over Morocco to France and by the determination arrived at, without the knowledge of our people, to support that secret bargain at the risk of promoting a war of the world.

"Secret Diplomacy" has proved itself the most potent of all weapons for the destruction of the peoples. So long as this weapon remains at the disposal of the British Foreign Office, so long as a few men can manipulate it to sport with the national destinies, so long will the British people be as helpless as the coloured balls which the professional juggler tosses and catches to the plaudits of the crowd.

January 1, 1921.

<sup>15</sup> "How the War Came," *op. cit.*

## PART I

[1905.]

The Morocco dispute—Its effect upon Anglo-German relations—British foreign policy and British Court influences—Personal relations between Edward VII. and William II.—The secret negotiations with Belgium—The problem of sea-power—Anglo-Russian relations.

## PART I

### Chronology of Principal Events in 1905.

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Concentration of British Fleet in North Sea. Lord Fisher, First Sea-Lord, and Sir Philip Watts, Chief Constructor at the Admiralty, design the *Dreadnought* ..... *January-February.*

Russian defeats by Japan. Port Arthur surrendered (January), Annihilation of Russian Fleet (May 27) ..... *January-June*

Massacres and Revolutionary movements in Russia.....  
*January-October.*

The Kaiser pays a visit to Tangier and informs a deputation of Moroccan notables that he looks upon the Sultan of Morocco as an independent Sovereign.....*March 31.*

British Imperialist Press describes the visit as a challenge to the Anglo-French *Entente* and denies that Germany has any right to concern herself with the future of Morocco.....*April.*

Germany presses for another International Conference on Morocco following the precedent set by the Madrid Convention of 1880. British and French diplomacy resist a Conference.....*April.*

The Sultan of Morocco invites the Powers Signatory to the Madrid Convention to a Conference .....*May 30.*

The British Government informs the Sultan that it will be no party to a Conference. The *Times* denounces a Conference and attacks Germany and the Kaiser with great violence.....*June.*

M. Delcassé, French Foreign Minister, fails to carry his colleagues with him in his opposition to a Conference and resigns...*June.*

M. Delcassé is interviewed by *Le Gaulois*, and forehadows the annihilation of Germany's trade and shipping through an Anglo-French naval coalition .....*July 12.*

Anglo-Japanese Alliance.....*August.*

Treaty of Portsmouth between Russia and Japan.. *September.*

First steps towards Anglo Russian understanding.....*Autumn.*

The French reactionary Press publish accounts purporting to describe the proceedings at the last Cabinet meeting of M. Delcassé with his colleagues (June) in the course of which the former is said to have communicated assurances of a British seizure of the Kiel Canal and a landing on German soil in the event of a Franco-German war over Morocco. Substantial accuracy of these revelations confirmed by Jaurès.....*October.*

First *Dreadnought* officially laid down .....*October.*

Advent of a Liberal Ministry to power, with Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman as Premier, and Sir Edward Grey as Foreign Secretary.....*December.*

The German Emperor informs Mr. Alfred Beit, the South African millionaire, that he believes England wants war, and that he is cognisant of the plans of Sir John Fisher (First Sea-Lord, since October 21, 1904) to seize the opportunity of German naval unreadiness to provoke war, to make a sudden attack, to "Copenhagen" the German Fleet, and to land 100,000 men either in Schleswig-Holstein or on the Pomeranian Coast.....*December.*

Sir John Fisher informs Colonel Repington that "Admiral Wilson's Channel Fleet was alone strong enough to smash the whole German Fleet"; and that he (Fisher) "had seen on paper Lord Lansdowne's assurances to M. Cambon, and that they were quite distinct in their tenor." .....*December.*

Conversations between the French Military Attaché in London, Colonel Repington, Sir John Fisher, Lord Esher, General Grierson (Operations Branch) and Major Gorton (Intelligence Branch), in regard to an Anglo-French military and naval combination. Sir E. Grey communicated with .....*December.*

DESPATCHES FROM THE BELGIAN MINISTERS  
IN LONDON, PARIS AND BERLIN, AND FROM  
THE BELGIAN *CHARGE D'AFFAIRES* IN BERLIN.

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ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 1.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *February 7, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

The hostility of the English public towards the German nation is not of recent date. It is founded, apparently, in jealousy and in fear: jealousy, in view of Germany's economic and commercial schemes; fear, from the perception that the German Fleet may perhaps one day become a competitor for that naval supremacy which is the only kind to which England can lay claim. This state of mind is fomented by the English Press, heedless of international complications; and a slap at the ambitious Emperor, and the machinations of his Chancellor, never fails to draw the applause of the crowd.

Attack provokes retaliation; and one perceives a corresponding bitterness of tone among German writers and journalists. When it was known the other day that the English Admiralty proposed that the Fleet, which till now has had its base in the Mediterranean, should be concentrated in the North Sea,<sup>1</sup> Dr. Paasche sounded the alarm, and saw in this plan a proof that the Cabinet of London regarded Germany as the only enemy they had to fear in Europe.

Last week, at a banquet, Mr. A. Lee, Civil Lord of the Admiralty, praised the reforms recently introduced by the Government as making it possible to strike the first blow before the enemy were ready, even before war,

indeed, were declared.<sup>2</sup> He added that it was, above all, in the direction of the North Sea that the Admiralty should keep a sharp look out.

These words have created a great sensation in Germany; so much so that an effort was made to gloss over the affair; and they say here that Mr. Lee's language was misinterpreted, and that the two Governments are on excellent terms and mean to remain so. But the spirit of jingoism runs its course unchecked among the people in England; and the newspapers are bit by bit poisoning public opinion, until people have come to believe that Germany has no right to increase her naval strength, and that her Navy Estimates constitute a challenge to England.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 2.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *February 18, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Having had to make seven journeys since November 15, and to transact any amount of pressing business during the brief intervals that I have been able to spend in Berlin, my correspondence has of necessity been limited to the absolute minimum. This is the reason why—despite the sensation it created—I did not write to you about the interview between the Chancellor and the English journalist, Mr. Bashford, which was published three months ago. In informing the British public that Germany does not dream of any aggression against England, Count Bülow said no more than what is recognised by everyone who considers the matter dispassionately. Germany would have nothing to gain from a contest. Moreover, she is not ready for the struggle. Despite the progress that she has made in maritime matters, Germany's naval forces are still so far inferior to those of England that it would be madness for her to provoke a war. The German Fleet has been created with a purely defensive object. The small capacity of the

coal bunkers in her High Seas Fleet, and the small number of her cruisers, prove besides that her Fleet is not intended for use at any distance from the coast.<sup>3</sup>

I thought it all the less necessary to mention this interview to you because it was published in all the papers, and I did not expect that it would meet with any greater success than the numerous other attempts at a reconciliation that have preceded it.

The real cause of the English hatred of Germany is the jealousy aroused by the astonishing development of Germany's merchant navy and of her commerce and manufactures. This hatred will last until the English have thoroughly learnt to understand that the world's trade is not by rights an exclusively English monopoly. Moreover, it is studiously fostered by the *Times* and a whole string of other daily papers and periodicals, that do not stop short at calumny in order to pander to the tastes of their readers.

King Edward VII. is said to be a whole-hearted lover of peace; but a King of England has only a very limited influence in shaping the course of his country's politics.<sup>4</sup> The English Government to some extent shares the popular feeling; at least, it cannot go against the stream, seeing that it is entirely dependent upon the House of Commons, which is gaining ever-increasing control over the executive power.

No doubt one of the chief reasons for the recent agreement between France and England (an agreement of which the explanations given have been, in my opinion, inadequate) was England's desire to have her hands free in the direction of Germany.<sup>5</sup>

But whatever may have been at the back of their minds, English Ministers had always duly observed the proper forms. It was obvious that the new disposition of the English Navy was aimed at Germany. If its centre has now been shifted to the North Sea, it certainly is not because of Russia, whose material stock is to a great extent destroyed, and whose Navy has just given striking proof of incompetence; but there was no need to proclaim the fact. Mr. Lee's speech made all the more painful an impression because he, as Civil Lord of the Admiralty, said that the enemy would hear the guns of the English Fleet before they had even time to learn from the papers that war was declared.<sup>6</sup> He must have in mind, then, some act of aggression on the part of England.

Herr von Mühlberg told me that the Emperor spoke very strongly to the English Ambassador at Berlin about Mr. Lee's philippics. The latter has since published a corrected version of his speech, in which the phrases offensive to Germany are altered.<sup>7</sup> However, they do not seem to put much faith here in this denial.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE KAISER'S VISIT TO TANGIER.

No. 3.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *April 1, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

You are aware of the unpopularity of the German Emperor in England, especially since his historic telegram;<sup>8</sup> and you know that the nation has no great love for Germany. The Emperor's visit to Tangier<sup>9</sup> has not failed to call forth disagreeable articles in the Press, which is glad to have an opportunity of venting its spite against the sovereign of a country which, besides being England's commercial rival, aims at creating a first-class Navy, and which is at this moment encouraging the people of Morocco in their sullen opposition to the designs of France.<sup>10</sup>

It is feared that Germany will insist on the maintenance of the "open door" at Tangier, and will uphold the independence of the Sultanate, and thereby thwart the policy of "peaceful penetration" on which France, with England's consent, has embarked.

People seem convinced that in going to Tangier the Emperor meant to read a lesson not only to France, but also to France's friend.

This sensitiveness on the part of Britain with respect to Berlin has existed for a long time, but it is not reassuring to find it increasing rather than diminishing.

So far, the English Cabinet has had no occasion to express its views, nor has the question been mooted in the House; but there is a popular rumour that the reply to the Emperor William's attitude will be an Anglo-French

demonstration, in the form of visits interchanged by the squadrons of the two nations on the lines of what took place in 1893, when the Russian Fleet went to Toulon to set the seal upon (*affirmer*) Franco-Russian friendship.<sup>11</sup>

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## KING EDWARD AND M. DELCASSÉ.

No. 4.

MONSIEUR A. LEGHAIT, Belgian Minister at Paris,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *May 7, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

The King of England's presence in Paris, at a time when the air is still electrified by events at Tangier, is significant. Whilst attentively noting its significance, however, one must not attach too great importance to it. The King's engagements did not necessitate his staying in Paris just now, and if he has chosen to do so it is obviously in order to give France at this moment a new proof of friendship, and to emphasise the solidarity that prevails between the parties who signed the agreement of April 8, 1904. This solidarity has, in fact, been clearly and strongly, but unostentatiously affirmed, without any toasts or public demonstrations. The King, however, has not confined himself to expressing his sentiments and views to M. Delcassé and other French politicians; he has also taken care that the Court of Berlin should be informed of them, and to this effect he had a long talk with the German Ambassador after the dinner at the Elysée, and appears to have used very plain language to him. The gist of this important conversation was communicated to M. Delcassé, but secrecy is maintained as to the actual words that passed.

The state of nervous tension that prevails here is maintained by the determined silence which Germany preserves, in spite of M. Delcassé's offer of clearing up all misunderstandings by a discussion. People are asking themselves when and how an end will be put to the present false situation. Only yesterday Prince Radolin<sup>12</sup> was received by M. Delcassé. He laid himself out to be

agreeable, but never touched on the question of Morocco. It is found convenient to assume that the Emperor William's visit to Tangier was a demonstration of personal initiative, and that accordingly at Berlin they are awaiting His Majesty's return to regulate its consequences.

I am told that the idea of calling a conference to carry on and complete the work of the Madrid Conference of 1880 has been abandoned because none of the Powers wanted it, and that the Sultan of Morocco can hardly be expected to take the initiative in such a proposal.

It is maintained in Government circles that the Franco-English and Franco-Spanish conventions have not involved any departure from the spirit of the Madrid convention, that ample explanations have been given on this matter, and that the action of France in Morocco, which is supported by England, Spain and Italy, is on a perfectly correct basis,<sup>13</sup> whereas Germany's attitude can only be based on fears and suspicions which have no grounds of excuse and which are injurious to France.

Although all the party leaders feel themselves under the circumstances bound for the time being to support M. Delcassé's foreign policy, yet this does not mean that they approve of it. Indeed a good many of them had warned him that he had better keep off this question, which is one that has been under observation for a long time past and whose danger has always been appreciated.

M. Delcassé thought that the agreement with England had dispelled these dangers, and that the moment was ripe for extending French influence in this part of Africa. He is now told that England's attitude was misleading, and that the immediate proof of this is the agreement that she has forced on with Spain. As a matter of fact it is known that the secret clauses of this agreement give Spain special advantages for the organisation of finance and currency; and that the distribution of spheres of influence ultimately contemplated will exclude France from Tangier and from the most important part of the coast.<sup>14</sup>

The Franco-Spanish agreement was presented to the Powers by the two countries concerned as being a corollary to the Anglo-French agreement. Germany therefore could not be ignorant of its provisions, and the attitude which she has subsequently adopted can only be founded on political considerations of a general nature, or else in the fear that the negotiations begun at Fez

may, with England's tacit consent, end in results on a scale much more extensive than has been hitherto avowed.<sup>15</sup>

According to information derived from authoritative sources, I gather that there are not believed to be any secret clauses appended to the agreement of April 8, 1904, but that there is thought to be a sort of tacit understanding by which England will allow France a fairly free hand in Morocco, subject to the terms of the secret clauses of the Franco-Spanish agreement—clauses which, if not dictated, were at any rate strongly backed by the Cabinet in London.

Although people may be inclined to read somewhat Machiavellian designs into England's benevolent policy towards France over the Morocco affair, yet they do not go so far as to believe that England's aims and aspirations have been formulated in any document that provides for general complications. Rather are they inclined to think that the present difficulties have taken the Cabinets of Paris and London by surprise, creating a situation that was not foreseen, and which consequently cannot have been provided for in its general consequences by any engagements previously entered into. It is just this want of foresight with which M. Delcassé is reproached; and his political opponents, who were not sparing in their warnings, will not be slow to take advantage of the actual crisis, no matter how it may end, to insist upon his resignation.<sup>16</sup>

The abnormal prolongation of the present anxious and unsettled crisis only serves to render the position of the Minister for Foreign Affairs still more precarious; and this, perhaps, corresponds to the wishes of Berlin.

Everyone is very anxious to see what the Emperor William will say at Gravelotte on the 11th instant. Since he has decided to give a purely civilian character to the ceremony, it is to be hoped that he means to take advantage of this opportunity to mitigate the effect of his landing at Tangier. But however that may be, the confidence which had been restored in the relations between France and Germany has vanished, and things have gone back to where they were some twenty years ago.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) A. LEGHAIT.

## M. DELCASSÉ'S RESIGNATION.

No. 5.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *June 8, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

The news of M. Delcassé's resignation has been received with regret by British Government Press organs. The Anglophil policy of the late Minister for Foreign Affairs, so energetically seconded by the French Ambassador in London, had resulted in an entente of which the usefulness has been fully demonstrated by recent events; and public opinion is dominated by the uncertainty as to the line which French policy will pursue under his successor.

Whilst congratulating M. Delcassé on the great work he has accomplished, the *Times* acknowledges, as regards Morocco, that he failed to consider the state of affairs that would arise if Russia were defeated in the Far East and Germany thereby acquired a chance to intervene and encourage the Sultan<sup>17</sup> in withstanding France's designs.

At first, certainly, Germany appeared quite indifferent to the Anglo-French arrangement, and took care to give no hint of the advantage she hoped to gain by Russia's compulsory passivity in European affairs; but M. Delcassé is none the less to blame for having imagined that he could dispense with Germany's consent when settling a question of very great commercial interest for her.

The *Times* expresses the hope that M. Rouvier, the suggested successor to M. Delcassé, will continue that entente cordiale which has become more than a mere policy of the Governments and is now a true union of the two nations; and it assures the French Government in this case that the attitude of loyal co-operation adopted by England will be maintained.

Without desiring to prejudice France's action, the *Times* states that if the Republican Government should refuse to take part in the Conference proposed by the Sultan of Morocco, England will do the same, and that, here as elsewhere, the British Government will adhere faithfully to the policy which underlies the agreement with France and Spain.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 6.

COUNT D'URSEL, Belgian *Chargé d'Affaires* in Berlin,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, August 5, 1905.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Two German papers, of no special significance, the *Reichsbote* and the *Staatshürger*, have thought fit to draw their readers' attention to the danger to which Germany may be exposed from the proposed manœuvres of the English squadron in the Baltic; and they have been suggesting that the riparian Powers should prohibit foreign fleets from having access to that sea. The *Kölnische Zeitung*, in an inspired article of July 30, took the trouble to point out that there were no grounds for the alarm manifested by the papers in question, and that if the British Fleet thought fit to approach the German shore it would receive that courteous welcome due to it by international usage; that the excitement of the English Press appeared inexplicable, and that if it persisted in taking fright at the suggestions thrown out by a few German newspapers it might be reminded that it is not so long since the visit of a German squadron to Plymouth called forth the most pessimistic remarks from the English Press. Again, quite recently, the utterances of a certain Civil Lord of the Admiralty, though mitigated, it is true, by explanations from a high quarter, have furnished fresh proofs of the unfriendly character of English opinion with regard to Germany.<sup>18</sup>

In its yesterday's issue, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* reprinted an article from the *Fremdenblatt* couched in the same spirit. The Viennese paper went on to say that it was possible for Germany and England to compete in the economic field without such rivalry necessarily finding an echo in the domain of politics. In its reprint of the *Fremdenblatt* article, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* added the following sentence: "We trust that these views will be received on the other side of the Channel in the spirit they deserve."

It is to be feared that this wish will remain a platonic one. The rivalry between England and Germany is too deeply rooted to be capable of being remedied by the

professions of well-meaning people. The English will not tolerate any possible danger to their commerce and their power at sea. Now the gigantic strides made by Germany constitute a permanent threat to England, and any means by which that expansion may be checked are good enough for her. The recent interview between the German Emperor and the Tsar,<sup>19</sup> the Emperor William's visit to Copenhagen,<sup>20</sup> the presence of a German squadron in Danish waters, are so many pretexts for the English Press to exhaust itself in recriminations and invective against Germany. If there is any quarter in which England can make difficulties for Germany she hastens to make good the opportunity. Of significance in this respect is the open assistance rendered by the English to the rebels in the German colony of S.-W. Africa, by recognising them as formal belligerents and forbidding the transport through Cape Colony of food stores and munitions destined for the German troops.<sup>21</sup>

For the last two days there has been talk of an interview between the Emperor of Germany and the King of England upon German soil. One may be allowed to express one's scepticism as to any result it could have in ameliorating the relations between the two countries.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) L. d'URSEL.

## ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 7.

COUNT D'URSEL, Belgian *Chargé d'Affaires* in Berlin,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, August 22, 1905.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

In my report of the 5th instant I had the honour to speak of the alarmist note being sounded by certain German newspapers on learning that the English squadron was preparing to manœuvre within Baltic waters. These papers proposed nothing less than that access of the Baltic to foreign fleets should be prohibited. Officially-inspired statements have cleared matters up. It was pointed out that a German squadron had anchored off the English coast without England having taken offence, and that

international courtesy required that the English vessels should meet with a similar reception.

The same note is sounded in the inspired article, appended, which was published by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* the day before yesterday in its weekly review. There it says that the English Fleet in the course of its manœuvres will touch at several foreign ports, and in particular at German ones; that it is the duty of the inhabitants of these towns to accord to the English officers and crews the same cordial reception which the members of the German Navy experienced in England, where the authorities did everything in their power to render their visit pleasant. In conclusion, the article expresses the wish that the visit of the English squadron may contribute to strengthen that mutual esteem which two great civilised nations owe to one another.

It is to be feared that this official aspiration will remain a platonic one. The way in which the British Press stirred up public feeling over the Morocco incident, the exaggerated enthusiasm with which the French sailors were welcomed in England,<sup>22</sup> the scarcely civil behaviour of King Edward VII. in staying for a cure within a few miles of the German frontier without manifesting the least desire to meet his nephew<sup>23</sup>—all are symptoms of England's hostility towards Germany. It would consequently be extraordinary if anything beyond bare courtesy were shown to the English sailors. The Town Council of Swinemunde have afforded an instance of such lack of enthusiasm in refusing to vote funds for the reception of the squadron.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) L. d'URSEL.

## BRITAIN, RUSSIA AND GERMANY.

No. 8.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *September 23, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

For years certain English newspapers, and principally the *National Review*, have been carrying on a campaign

with the object of bringing about a *rapprochement* between England and Russia, and since the conclusion of the Anglo-French agreement, French diplomacy has been busy to the same purpose. It is persistently rumoured that negotiations are proceeding, and certain symptoms lead me to believe that they deserve careful attention. I am informed that the idea of issuing a Russian loan in England is no longer repudiated in the circles of high finance in London.<sup>24</sup> It is not long since the English bankers would not even have consented to discuss the possibility of such a thing.

I asked Baron von Richthofen<sup>25</sup> yesterday what importance was to be attached to the current rumours. His answer was that there is undoubtedly in England a movement favourable to a *rapprochement* with Russia, especially in upper circles and in a very high quarter. At this point I interrupted, and said that the King of England is credited with some such project, and that he is even said to have communicated it to the Emperor at their last meeting. The Secretary of State did not contradict me.

Baron von Richthofen went on to say to me that though M. Delcassé had fallen, there was nevertheless a strong party in France which aimed at carrying on the policy of the late Minister for Foreign Affairs. In all these combinations enmity to Germany played its part. The Secretary of State does not, however, think the danger very great. The basis was lacking for an entente between England and Russia, which would be in contradiction to the alliance concluded on the 12th of August last between England and Japan.<sup>26</sup> Against whom could that alliance be aimed, if not against the Empire of the Tsar? Nor did such a project square with the very sympathetic terms in which M. Witte, at Paris,<sup>27</sup> had lately spoken of Germany. The President of the Russian Ministerial Cabinet was about to return to St. Petersburg, and would no doubt have something to say to it. If any agreement between England and Russia were imminent, M. Witte would certainly be in London; whereas he was confining himself to visiting Paris and Berlin, and would not see any head of a State except M. Loubet and the Emperor of Germany.

I replied that in spite of the immense service just rendered by M. Witte to Russia he was believed to be still by no means in favour at Court. Baron von.

Richthofen replied to this that M. Witte's manners are not very good, and that he blurts out all that he thinks, and that is why the Grand Dukes do not like him, but that he is a man whose word carries weight and whose opinion cannot be ignored.

From our (Belgian) point of view, it is to be hoped that the Secretary of State is right. The Triple Alliance, with Germany at its head, has given us 30 years of peace in Europe. It is now weakened by the state of decay into which the Austro-Hungarian Empire has fallen. The new triple entente between France, England and Russia would not replace it; on the contrary, it would be a cause for perpetual uneasiness. This is so keenly felt here that at the beginning of last year, when it was known that active negotiations were in progress between Paris and London, without their scope and purport being accurately ascertained, the Emperor was persuaded that an act of aggression was imminent from France, allied with England.

The very great obstacles in the way of an understanding between London and St. Petersburg do not preclude its possibility. You will note that the Secretary of State merely considers it unlikely. But the entente between France and England was even more unlikely, and yet it has been realised. It was ratified by the two nations because it was the expression of their common hatred of Germany. Similarly, the Russian hates the German, because he sees in Germany a neighbour who sets the standard of comparison for his own country, and whose superior civilisation irritates his barbaric pride.

It is no secret that the personal relations of the Emperor and the King of England are, frankly, bad.

The new distribution of the English naval forces is obviously aimed at Germany. If there had been any doubt about it, the imprudent speech of the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Lee, would have opened people's eyes.<sup>22</sup> In selecting the Baltic as the scene of the English Fleet's manœuvres the British Government has, of course, been perfectly within its rights. It would have been tactless of Germany to take offence, and her reception of the English sailors has been extremely courteous; but the fact remains that it was a demonstration whose object was to make the German people tangibly aware of the overwhelming superiority in numbers of the English naval forces. The necessary telegram from the English

admiral to the Emperor was freezing in its tone, and His Majesty replied in the same manner.<sup>29</sup>

The unparalleled efforts made by the English Press to prevent a peaceable settlement of the Morocco incident, together with its somewhat insincere readiness to credit all the calumnies levelled against Germany's policy, show how thoroughly public opinion in Great Britain is prepared to welcome any combination inimical to Germany.

However, the chief cause of dissension between England and Russia has, for the time being, been removed. I mean Russia's morbid ambition to continually go on extending the boundaries of an Empire that already is much too big. Russia's military disasters and her internal difficulties will oblige her to renounce a policy of conquest for a long time to come.

On the other hand, it is a fact that Germany has taken advantage of the struggle between Russia and Japan to improve greatly her relations with the neighbouring Empire. St. Petersburg was grateful to her for the benevolent neutrality which allowed Russia to concentrate all the forces at her disposal on the side of the Far East. But neither nations nor governments pride themselves on gratitude. How long will the remembrance of favours last when once the danger is over? Can we expect that Russia, finding herself continually on the rocks, and having flooded France and Germany with Russian loans, will long resist the temptation to open up a new financial market to her advantage?

I have, of course, no reason to believe that any positive step whatever has yet been finally taken; but there is always a possibility which one must not leave out of account. The constellations of the political firmament are not everlastingly fixed. There is, perhaps, in process of formation a new grouping of the great Powers which would diminish European security, and which consequently could only take place to our (Belgium's) disadvantage.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## BRITAIN, JAPAN, RUSSIA AND GERMANY.

No. 9.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *September 30, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Now that I no longer have the English courier at my disposal, I frequently find myself hampered in my correspondence. I have more than once had to omit information or remarks which it would have been imprudent to send through the post.

I am taking advantage of the departure of M. de Bonin, who has had the kindness to take charge of a letter for you. I can thus speak to you about the treaty of alliance which was concluded on the 12th of last August between England and Japan, and which has just been made public. In discussing this diplomatic document, the *Koelnische Zeitung* says that the two Powers mutually guarantee each other's possessions in Asia, taking account of their peculiar position in Korea and Thibet, that they secure the *status quo* in the Far East, and recognise the principle of the open door. These last two points take account of the interests of a third party, and are in accordance with the aspirations of Germany. The *Koelnische Zeitung* is accordingly satisfied.

The official attitude of the Imperial Department of Foreign Affairs will no doubt be pitched in this key; but I know that the occurrence of this agreement has made a disagreeable impression there.

It is very unlikely that Russia will be capable of trying to take her revenge for the first ten years after her defeat, i.e., during the period actually covered by the treaty. Even if she recovers more quickly than one imagines, so far as she is concerned the alliance is superfluous, at least for Japan. For England it may be very agreeable and very useful to secure the assistance of the Japanese army for the defence of India, but it is not very clear in what way England could be of any use to her ally, unless perhaps from the financial aspect. She has not a single soldier to put at Japan's disposal, and Japan does not need English ships.

The Russian Fleet is wiped out. Russia, it is true, can procure a new Fleet quickly enough. That is a

question of money; but one cannot create admirals and sailors offhand. The personnel of the Russian Navy has given proof of appalling incapacity. Japan is master of the China Seas for long years to come.

If the object of the treaty is not to forestall aggression on the part of Russia, then against whom can it be directed, if not against Germany?

It was certainly not for its own sake that Kiao-Chau was seized by the (German) Empire. Germany wanted a base for operations in order to secure herself a share of the spoils at a time when the partition of China appeared to be imminent. The Anglo-Japanese alliance means that Germany must give up all hankerings of that sort. The precaution is all the more offensive because it is needless. Since the Japanese victories everybody must know that any idea of partitioning China is henceforth out of the question.

I should like to add as a personal remark of my own that it cannot even be said of this treaty that it prevents an understanding between Russia and England. The alliance between the latter country and Japan is a purely defensive one. Lord Lansdowne was, therefore, able to say with truth that it is not directed against Russia. This last-named Power must bind up her wounds before embarking once more on her policy of conquest. The moment is therefore more favourable than ever for a provisional delimitation of spheres of influence. The alliance would only be anti-Russian if Russia were harbouring plans of aggression, whereas she will remain incapable of doing so for a long time to come.

The general tone of the Press campaign that is being conducted in England shows that in that country an understanding with Russia is desired not with the object of pacification but from motives of hostility to Germany. It is to be feared that the King of England shares these views.

In one of my last letters to you I had occasion to point out that he is on thoroughly bad terms with the Emperor. I have learnt from a reliable source that His Majesty in a private conversation lately used language which is in marked contrast with those pacific sentiments with which he has been credited hitherto.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## BRITAIN, JAPAN AND RUSSIA.

No. 10.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *October 14, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

When communicating the Anglo-Japanese treaty of alliance to the Russian Government, Sir Charles Hardinge,<sup>30</sup> as you know, expressed the hope that Russia would see both in the fact of its communication and in the tenor of the treaty itself a proof of the pacific and friendly intentions of England.

Some days later, the Ambassador asked Count Lamsdorff<sup>31</sup> what impression a perusal of the treaty had made upon him. Count Lamsdorff replied—as I learn from an authentic source—that all the people with whom he had had occasion to discuss the treaty, beginning with the Emperor Nicholas II., have not the faintest doubt that the agreement is aimed at Russia.

Sir Charles Hardinge vigorously combated this point of view and expressed the opinion that the treaty might equally well be regarded as aimed at Germany. One word alone in the treaty, the mention of India, might be interpreted as bearing out the view that they had Russia in mind; but, said the Ambassador, one must take account of the purely defensive character of the treaty. If Russia is imbued with the same pacific sentiments as England, there is nothing to prevent her from subscribing to it.

England's efforts at St. Petersburg to represent her treaty of alliance with Japan as not aimed at Russia bears out what we already know of the London Cabinet's desire to enter into closer relations with this Power.

Your Excellency will remember that in the conversation with Baron von Richthofen, of which I had the honour to give you an account in my report of September 23, the Secretary of State told me that he did not believe in an Anglo-Russian Entente, because there was no basis for one. There is, however, a possible basis: England is now altogether indifferent to the fate of Turkey, whose preservation has been for so long the guiding principle of her policy. She might give Russia a free hand in Asia Minor. Moreover, such a combination would in her eyes have the advantage of embroiling Russia and Germany;

and the isolation of Germany is at this moment the main object of English policy.<sup>32</sup>

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## BRITAIN, FRANCE AND GERMANY.

No. 11.

MONSIEUR A. LEGHAIT, Belgian Minister in Paris,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs

PARIS, *October 24, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

A lull has come over the tempestuous events of the last few weeks; but it is a lull due rather to a wish to stifle dangerous polemics and questions to which there is no answer ready, rather than to any feeling of genuine security. The events that have occurred since last spring have troubled the equilibrium of Europe, opened up new horizons, and perturbed the foreign policy of France. It is but natural that such a shock should be succeeded by a period of quiet heart-searching.

Germany denies having made to the Roman Cabinet any confidential communications or instructions with the view of cautioning France. She does not admit any need of an intermediary in her relations with the Republican Government. Moreover, it is asserted that the sensational revelations that have appeared in the French Press in nowise disturbed the German Government, which was long since prepared for the eventualities thus revealed to the public.<sup>33</sup> The official denials that appeared in Paris and London are stated to have been made spontaneously, and not at all in consequence of any demand on the part of Prince Bülow for an explanation.

Although the feeling stirred up here by M. Delcassé's inconsiderate policy may pass over, and although there may be enough patriotism and enough dignity, even in the Press, to disguise the resentment aroused by Germany's attitude, nevertheless this resentment is deeply rooted in the hearts of Frenchmen, and will live on there. Those who revelled in dreams of peace have suffered a frightful disillusionment; the national jingoism has revived; people are discussing the efficiency of the

French defensive power as compared with the formidable organisation of France's Eastern neighbours, and seem ready to make fresh sacrifices in order that the navy and army may be prepared for any emergency. They are not blind to the fact that, as things are now, conditions on the frontier would prove quite as unfavourable as in 1870. What is chiefly deplored is the lack of organisation, of authority among the heads, and of the spirit of discipline in the army. If France, after long years of peaceful slumber, turns once more to furbishing her weapons, one could not say that she is prompted by thoughts of aggression, but she recognises that from the direction she gives to her foreign policy, or from the direction even that it is supposed to be taking, serious complications may arise. Supposing Germany saw a definite prospect of an Anglo-Franco-Russian understanding, would she, with all her desire to maintain peace, wait until such an alliance was consolidated? Would she not make any effort to burst by violence the iron ring within which such an alliance would seek to confine her? People know very well here that no one wants a war, but they cannot blind themselves to the fact that it may be started at any moment by economic and commercial rivalries, questions henceforth of vital importance to the Powers. England, in her efforts to maintain her supremacy and to hinder the development of her great German rival, is evidently inspired by the wish to avoid a conflict, but are not her selfish aims in themselves bringing it upon us? She thought, when she concluded the Japanese Alliance and gradually drew France into similar ties, that she had found the means to her end, by sufficiently paralysing Germany's powers as to make war impossible; for, in this case, certainly Germany would not have been herself attacked, and if she had taken the offensive her allies of the Triple Alliance would hardly have found themselves bound by the terms of the engagement to join her in an attack upon France. If Germany, strong in her victories and in her gigantic development, has sought to nip in the bud the intrigues of those who were trying to undermine the leading part she plays by reducing her to a pacific isolation, then it is to be presumed that she intends to pursue that course to its ultimate conclusion. Germany's complaints are addressed to France, but at bottom her grievance is against England, and the Government of the Republic, must be aware that if they

follow M. Delcassé's policy France would be a hostage in a contest from which England would profit.

If M. Rouvier had intended to commit himself to this prouder and more dignified, possibly more risky, line of policy, he would not have yielded to Germany's importunity and sacrificed M. Delcassé. It seems impossible, after such an act, that he should again resume the policy of his predecessor, which met with general condemnation. Yet this painful incident has left an uncomfortable impression, and there is a desire to restore the national self-respect by making some demonstration of France's political independence. For the moment, however, the situation is decidedly awkward, and no one can decide on the next step.

Germany seems more and more to be coming to regard a conflict with England as within the range of possibility, and to be seriously uneasy on this head. Hence all those hints in the inspired Press, whose object seems to be to give France an opening for stating which side she would take. The effect of these articles here is to arouse irritation. Far from making an open pronouncement in view of such an eventuality, people seem to feel that it is to France's interest to preserve the strictest possible neutrality, seeing that France could not, obviously, side with Germany, whilst if she allied herself to England she would run a serious risk of having to indemnify Germany for any damage inflicted on Germany by the British Fleet. One may assume, therefore, that M. Rouvier's aim is, first, to avoid all cause of European conflict; secondly, if war should break forth, to keep France out of it.

At this moment the Premier is in Spain, endeavouring to strengthen the ties of friendship in that quarter. As soon as he returns he will probably have to meet violent attacks in the Chamber. One cannot tell yet when the debate on foreign policy will take place, nor how stormy it will be; but the struggle will be a tough one, and very critical for M. Rouvier. Fears are even expressed as to his being able to retain office.

The Conference of Algeiras also is looked forward to with some anxiety. The Sultan hesitates to accept the programme submitted to him, and England is preparing to wreck it. Everybody agrees that this meeting will acquire quite special importance under the present strained conditions everywhere, and that it may have

results very different from those set down in the programme. England's rôle will then become more sharply accentuated, and will perforce bring about a decisive grouping of the Powers. The first effect of this would be to frustrate the work of the Conference, and Germany dreads such a grouping taking place, and would now be willing, it is said, to make some sacrifice of national pride by indefinitely adjourning the Conference rather than face the possible consequences of a meeting at this moment.

Prince Radolin has not left Paris all the summer, and is still in almost daily communication with the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) A. LEGHAIT.

## ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 12.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *October 27, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

The statue of Field-Marshal Count Moltke was unveiled yesterday in Berlin.

In the evening, at the banquet after the ceremony, the Emperor said that the day must be commemorated in two toasts. The first toast must be dedicated to the Past and the Memory (of the Dead). With profound gratitude to Providence, which had bestowed on the great Emperor the Paladins of a great age, his Majesty silently emptied his glass to the memory of the Emperor William's greatest general.

His Majesty went on to say: "The second glass is to the Future and to the Present! You, gentlemen, perceive where we stand in the world to-day. Powder dry, then! Swords sharpened! A clear aim! On the alert! And no pessimists! I raise my glass to our nation in arms! Here's to the German Army and to its General Staff! Hip, hip, hoorah!"

It would be impossible to indicate more clearly that, in spite of all official denials, the Emperor still believes that the object of England's policy at Paris, Tokyo, St. Petersburg, and Washington is not confined to improving

her relations with the great Powers within and outside of Europe, which would be perfectly legitimate; but that she aims, above all, at isolating Germany.

The prevailing tone here is an insurmountable distrust of England. A very large number of Germans are convinced that England is either seeking allies for an attack upon Germany, or else, which would be more in accordance with British tradition, that she is labouring to provoke a continental war in which she would not join, but of which she would reap the profits.<sup>34</sup>

I am told that many English people are troubled with similar fears, and go in dread of a German aggression.

I am puzzled upon what foundations such an impression in London can be based. Germany is absolutely incapable of attacking England. In order to land an army on English soil, it would be necessary to have the mastery of the seas for at least several days, and there is no chance of that for Germany. The most her fleet could do would be, by lying hid at the two ends of the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal and by crossing from one sea to the other in the night, to prevent a blockade of the German ports. It would then be able to choose its time for attacking the enemy squadrons when their crew and engines were exhausted. This is all that the German Fleet was built for. It would be quite unfitted to face a naval engagement off the British coast. The forces are numerically too disproportionate.

As for any invasion of the English colonies by Germany, it is idle to talk of it. Quite obviously no such dream can be entertained.

Are those people in England really sincere who go about expressing fears of a German invasion which could not materialise? Are they not rather pretending to be afraid of it in order to bring on a war which would annihilate Germany's navy, her merchant fleet, and her foreign commerce?<sup>35</sup> Germany is as vulnerable to attack as England is safe from it; and if England were to attack Germany merely for the sake of extinguishing a rival, it would only be in accordance with her old precedents.

In turn she wiped out the Dutch Fleet, with the assistance of Louis the Fourteenth; then the French Fleet; and the Danish Fleet she even destroyed in time of peace and without any provocation, simply because it constituted a naval force of some magnitude.

There are no ostensible grounds for war between

Germany and England. The English hatred for Germany arises solely from jealousy of Germany's progress in shipping, in commerce, and in manufacture.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 13.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *November 18, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Yesterday's *Reichsanzeiger* published the following extract from next year's Budget, giving the expenses for the Navy:

"The Government proposes to increase the number of ships by six large first-class and ten small second-class cruisers. There is to be an increase in the number of torpedo-boats, as well as in the tonnage of ships of the line and of big first-class cruisers, whose value has been demonstrated by the experience of the Russo-Japanese war. The number of officers and sailors is to be raised to about 6,000 men, as estimated. The scheme is to be spread over nine years. The main outline of it was known before the details were made public; and it has been favourably received by the public, which is all the more remarkable because the state of the Imperial finances is far from satisfactory."

The Navy used to be very unpopular in Germany. The revulsion in its favour set in after the Boer War and the war in Cuba,<sup>36</sup> both of which were regarded by public opinion in Germany as piratical acts, from the like of which Germany must be protected. And since the new disposition of Britain's naval force was incontestably aimed against Germany, the necessity of possessing a Fleet was all the more keenly felt, not with the object of attacking England—a thing no one dreams of, and which, moreover, would be impracticable—but solely as a defence against her.

On the Continent, Germany is only open to attack by France or by Russia. In the eventuality of a war with

these countries, the issue would be decided by the land armies, and a naval engagement, no matter which side won, would have no influence upon the peace terms. Thus Germany has no one to fear but England, and it is England alone who is forcing her to keep up a Navy out of proportion to what she needs for the defence of her commercial interests in foreign parts.

Unfortunately, the tone, not only of the English Press, but also of English Ministers, is of a kind to feed her suspicions. In spite of the official denials, nobody here doubts that M. Delcassé was egged on by England in his aggressive policy. It was much remarked that in the speeches of Lord Lansdowne (at the Constitutional Club) and Mr. Balfour (at the Lord Mayor's banquet), which were pacific on the whole, there were certain unfriendly allusions, which without naming Germany could only have been intended for her. Lord Lansdowne said that England had now and then been hampered by the fact that in various parts of the world she was faced with a competition which could profit nobody except possibly some clever potentate who knew how to use it to his own advantage. Mr. Balfour said he thought there would be no war in the future, unless nations or rulers should arise who thought that the only way of realising their schemes of national aggrandisement was by trampling on the rights of their neighbours. The Prime Minister added, however, that he saw no prospect of such a European calamity.<sup>37</sup>

I am puzzled as to where and when Germany can have thwarted England's policy. Are these suggestions reminiscent of the telegram that the Emperor sent to President Kruger after the capture of Jameson and his companions? That is a very old story now. Besides, people in London might remember that Jameson and his friends were merely a gang of filibusters organised, no doubt, *sub rosa* by the English Government, but disavowed by England officially.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## BRITAIN, FRANCE AND GERMANY.

No. 14.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *December 31, 1905.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Baron von Richthofen yesterday spoke to me of his satisfaction at the change of Government in England.<sup>38</sup> The Unionist Cabinet will not be regretted at Berlin. The Secretary of State does not imagine that there was any predetermined design in London for a rupture with Germany. It is rather that he explains Balfour's attitude as indicating an undue subservience to the wirepulling of a certain Press which was beyond their control. This weakness, however, was likely to lead to great dangers. Already, since the new Ministry has come into office, one can feel the tension relaxed. Campbell-Bannerman has a reputation for integrity and good faith which inspires confidence.

Baron von Richthofen says the French have lately been showing signs of quite unreasonable susceptibility. They took it into their heads, in Paris, that Germany was only waiting for an excuse to fall upon France. If war were forced upon Germany, she would take up the challenge, but has never felt the least inclination to provoke one. What would Germany gain by it? Germany's whole policy bears witness to her peaceful intentions. She has made no attempt whatsoever to take advantage of the disorders in Russia;<sup>39</sup> on the contrary, everything goes to show that her one desire is to maintain the *status quo*. M. Bihourd had spoken of a War-party. A handful of young officers might be eager for an opportunity of promotion, but no "War-party" exists. The whole of Germany is united in desiring peace.

I asked the Secretary of State whether I might regard as authentic a conversation<sup>40</sup> that was reported three days ago in *Le Temps* as having taken place between the Emperor and a certain French personage, in which his Majesty is represented as saying, to put it briefly, that people had been mistaken in believing that his Majesty was surrounded by a War-party, and that even if such a War-party were to exist, it could not signify, since the power to decide rests with his Majesty alone,<sup>41</sup> and that the

Emperor does not want war, regarding it as contrary to his duty towards God and towards his subjects.

Baron von Richthofen replied that the report in *Le Temps* was correct in substance if not in form. He added that the Marquis de Laguiche, the French military attaché at Berlin, was apparently the person to whom the Emperor had thus expressed himself. In any case, however, these are well known to be his Majesty's sentiments.

I replied that I thought his Majesty's policy might be defined by saying that it is his Majesty's supreme ambition to preserve peace throughout his reign.

The Secretary of State answered that this was indeed the dominating idea by which the imperial policy was inspired.

He could give no forecast of what will happen at the Conference of Algeciras, but has good hopes that a satisfactory result may be reached.

The Secretary of State made no mention of the German White Book<sup>42</sup> which they have been busy drawing up ever since the publication of the French Yellow Book, and which must be finished by now.

It is possible that they may have abandoned its publication, in order not to add fuel to a newspaper warfare, which, if it goes on, is bound to be detrimental to a good understanding.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GRFINDL.

## EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES TO TEXT

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<sup>1</sup>The decision to concentrate the British Fleet in the North Sea was announced on February 2 in a speech by Mr. Arthur Lee, Civil Lord of the Admiralty at Eastleigh, responding to a toast to the Imperial Forces.

<sup>2</sup>Mr. Lee, according to the published reports of his speech, said :

“Naval reforms . . . were the result of absolutely changed conditions, arising partly out of the redistribution of Naval Power in Europe and out of lessons of the present war in the Far East (Russo-Japanese). In the first place, there has been a *complete redistribution of the British Fleet*, in order to prepare for possible enemies. The balance and centre of naval power in Europe had been shifted during the last few years. *They had not so much to keep their eyes upon France and the Mediterranean, as they had to look with more anxiety, though not fear, towards the North Sea.* It was for that reason that the Fleets had been distributed to enable them to deal with any danger in that direction . . . rather than devolving their attention to the Mediterranean. . . . If war should unhappily be declared, *under existing conditions, the British Navy would get its blow in first, before the other side had time even to read in the papers that war had been declared.*” After referring to the intention no longer to repair ships, but to “build, instead, ships for the future which would be of the biggest and latest type . . . fewer in number, but more potent for the destruction of their enemies . . .” the Civil Lord went on to say, “*The redistribution would result in great economy. . . . Yet our fighting strength as a fighting naval power, had been practically doubled during the last few weeks.* The British Navy was stronger and more ready now to undertake any task which the nation demanded of it than hitherto.”

It is interesting to compare the sentence “under existing circumstances the British Navy would get its blow in first, before the other side had time even to read in the papers that war had been declared,” with Lord Fisher’s subsequent avowals—he was then First Sea Lord—in his “Memoirs,” published in 1919, as to his desire to “Copenhagen” the German Fleet, i.e., to attack without a previous declaration of war. (See Note 34) : also Chronology.

*The Berliner Tageblatt* (moderate Liberal) commenting upon Mr. Lee’s speech asked the meaning of this “threat of war in time of peace.” Mr. Lee issued a diplomatic correction of his speech five days later. He declared that what he had said was this :

“The British Fleet is now prepared strategically for every conceivable emergency, *for, we must assume that all foreign naval powers are possible enemies.* Owing to the growth of near naval powers, we have, unfortunately, more possible enemies than

formerly, and we have to keep an anxious eye not only on the Mediterranean and Atlantic, but on the North Sea as well." He also added that "his speech had been misrepresented in an extraordinary manner. His statement embodied no threat, and was one to which no foreign power could possibly object."

<sup>3</sup> The respective Anglo-German naval position *two years later* was thus stated by Lord Fisher in a letter to King Edward VII. :

"It is an absolute fact that Germany has not laid down a single Dreadnought, nor has she commenced building a single battleship or big cruiser for eighteen months. . . . England has seven Dreadnoughts and three Dreadnought battle-cruisers : total, ten Dreadnoughts built and building, while Germany in March last had not even begun one Dreadnought . . . we have 123 Destroyers and 40 Submarines. The Germans have 48 Destroyers and one Submarine." (Fisher's "Memoirs.") See, too, Fisher's opinion of comparative power of the two Fleets in 1905, under Chronology (December).

<sup>4</sup> This was certainly untrue of King Edward VII., the bulk of the available evidence going to show that his influence in shaping, or at least influencing, foreign policy was considerable.

<sup>5</sup> The published Anglo-French Convention and Declarations of April 8, 1904.

<sup>6</sup> See Note II.

<sup>7</sup> *id.*

<sup>8</sup> To President Kruger congratulating him on defeating the Jameson raid upon the Transvaal.

<sup>9</sup> March, 1905.

<sup>10</sup> The German Emperor's visit to Tangier was an act of German State policy in which the Emperor followed the advice of his Ministers (see von Bülow's "Imperial Germany" *Cassell*). It was, in effect, a challenge to the Secret Agreements between Britain, France, and Spain for the territorial and economic partition of Morocco. The existence of these Secret Agreements, which were concluded in April and October, 1904, were hinted at by the French Press in the autumn of that year. Their general character was then either surmised or actually known in Berlin. Their text was only revealed to the world in November, 1911. For all Notes on the Morocco affair, the reader is further referred to "Ten Years' Secret Diplomacy" (National Labour Press).

<sup>11</sup> The Franco-Russian military Convention was signed in August, 1892.

<sup>12</sup> German Ambassador.

<sup>13</sup> This would naturally be the view which official circles in Paris desired to impress upon the diplomatic representatives of neutral Powers. The *published* Conventions of 1904 did not involve a departure from the Madrid Convention (1880), which made of Morocco an international concern. But the Secret Agreements did, for they treated Morocco as a country whose future could be determined according to the sole interests of three Powers : in other words, they converted an international problem into a national one, and sought to solve it in accordance with the nationalistic interests of the three contracting Powers without any reference to the other signatory Powers of the Madrid Convention.

<sup>14</sup> This was true but unknown, of course, to the French public. It was the object of British diplomacy to prevent France from acquiring, under the partition scheme, the Mediterranean coast line of Morocco, which British diplomatic and strategic interests required should not fall into the hands of a first class naval Power.

<sup>15</sup> See Note 13.

<sup>16</sup> M. Delcassé was specially blamed by his colleague for his deliberate failure to notify officially to the German Government both the Anglo-French and the Franco-Spanish Convention. By this procedure M. Delcassé implicitly denied to the German Government the right of asking questions and discussing the tenor of an agreement arrived at between three Powers concerning a State in which Germany possessed well-defined interests, and with which she had maintained diplomatic relations for many years; a State, moreover, whose international relationships had been the subject of International Agreement since 1880. M. Delcassé's action was tantamount to telling Germany that the future of Morocco would be settled without her. In order to secure a free hand in Morocco for France, he had made concessions to England, Spain and Italy. He thought he could dispense with German approval or disapproval. His attitude was gratuitously provocative, gave umbrage to the German Government, heightened the suspicions it entertained as to the true character of the Anglo-Franco-Spanish Agreements, and led to the first German intervention in favour of the preservation of Moroccan independence, of which the first act was the German Emperor's visit to Tangier. It must also be borne in mind that M. Delcassé had made repeated professions that the object of France was to preserve the independence of Morocco, and the published Convention declared that the French Government had no intention of "altering the political *status* of Morocco"; the truth being, of course, that the secret clauses attached to the Convention, and the secret Convention with Spain concluded six months later, postulated the dismemberment of Morocco and the establishment of a Franco-Spanish economic monopoly over the whole country. M. Delcassé's policy reopened the old wounds between France and Germany and, as the Belgian diplomatist states, revived all the bitterness which the best intentioned men in both countries had been gradually assuaging for the last twenty years. M. Delcassé found no support among his colleagues in October (1905) when the consequences of his policy became manifest, and resigned.

<sup>17</sup> The Sultan of Morocco.

<sup>18</sup> See Note 2.

<sup>19</sup> The Kaiser and the Tsar met at Bjorkoe on July 23 (1905). It was at this interview that a Russo-German Treaty of Alliance was drawn up between the Tsar and the Kaiser. Its ratification without advising France was opposed by the Tsar's Ministers, Witte and Lamsdorff. A full account of this transaction is given in Dillon's "The Eclipse of Russia" (J. M. Dent). He places the whole initiative on the Kaiser's shoulders. German official accounts deny this, and attribute the initiative to the Tsar, who is said to have approached the Kaiser in October, 1904, after the Hull incident (when the Russian Fleet, on its way to Japan, sank some British trawlers), which caused fears in the Tsar's mind of a war with Britain.

<sup>20</sup> The German Fleet was in Danish waters on July 21. The Kaiser was at Copenhagen on July 31, on "family affairs."

<sup>21</sup> There were mutual recriminations at this period over the attitude of the British authorities at the Cape and in Bechuanaland towards the Hottentot tribes who had risen against the Germans in German South West Africa.

<sup>22</sup> The French Fleet put in at Cowes on August 7.

<sup>23</sup> King Edward was at Marienbad (Austrian-Bohemia) on August 17 until the beginning of September.

<sup>24</sup> Rumours of British participation in a Russian loan began to appear in the Press about this time. The *Times* commenting upon them on October 19 remarked, "it would be the first occasion for many years of the issue of a Russian loan on the English market and would exercise the happiest influence upon Anglo-American relations." The loan materialised in the spring of the following year. It was a loan for £90 million sterling at 5 per cent., quoted in London and Paris.

<sup>25</sup> Under-Secretary of State at the German Foreign Office.

<sup>26</sup> August 12, 1905. Chief Provision: (a) The consolidation and maintenance of the general peace in the regions of East Asia and India. (b) The independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire and equal opportunities for the commerce of all nations. (c) The maintenance of the territorial rights of both contracting parties in East Asia and India. Britain undertook to make common cause with Japan if Japan were attacked by another Power while the Russo-Japanese war lasted; and agreed to Japan's paramount position in Korea, while Japan assented to Britain taking such measures as she might deem necessary in the proximity of the Indian frontiers.

<sup>27</sup> Russian Finance Minister.

<sup>28</sup> See Note 2.

<sup>29</sup> The text of the telegram was as follows: Admiral Wilson: "May I be permitted to express to your Majesty, as Admiral of the Fleet in the British Navy, the great pleasure which my officers have felt in meeting their comrades of your Majesty's Fleet?" German Emperor: "I am delighted to hear that it gave you pleasure to meet your comrades of the German Fleet."

<sup>30</sup> Then British Ambassador to Russia.

<sup>31</sup> Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>32</sup> The change in British foreign policy towards Turkey was, of course, determined by its change towards Russia.

<sup>33</sup> These revelations may be here summarised. The *Figaro*, the *Matin* and the *Echo de Paris*, the two latter openly reactionary and bellicose, published detailed statements to the effect that the British and French Governments had an arrangement to join forces against Germany in the event of the Morocco quarrel leading to war, and that military and naval plans for concerted action had even been carefully drawn up. According to these statements M. Delcassé informed his colleagues at the stormy Cabinet Council which ended in his resignation, that he was assured of British support if the French Government maintained

towards Germany the attitude that he (M. Delcassé) had adopted, i.e., that Germany had no *locus standi* in the settlement of Morocco, and if, as the result of that attitude, war should ensue, the British Government was prepared to mobilise the fleet, seize the Keil Canal, and land 100,000 men in Schleswig-Holstein. These assurances had been verbally conveyed by Lord Lansdowne to M. Cambon, the French Ambassador. M. Lauzanne, the editor of the *Matin*, published these revelations over his own signature, and adhered to them despite official denials. Moreover, Jaurés, the French Socialish leader, confirmed the substantial accuracy of the story both in a speech at Limoges and in *L'Humanité*. In this connection the reader is referred to Lord Fisher's disclosures mentioned in Notes 2 and 34. The precise character of Lord Lansdowne's assurances to the French Ambassador is still a diplomatic secret. Sir John Fisher (afterwards Lord Fisher), then First Sea Lord, told Colonel Repington in December, 1905, that they were "quite distinct in their tenor."

<sup>34</sup> Sir (now Lord) John Fisher tells us in his "Memoirs" that the German Emperor informed Mr. Alfred Beit (the South African millionaire) that he had heard of "my (Fisher's) idea of 'Copenhagening' the German fleet": in other words of making a sudden descent upon Germany, without a previous declaration of war, repeating the action against Denmark in 1807. That Sir John Fisher, who was first Sea Lord, and, therefore, in charge of the activities and disposal of the British Navy, did entertain these views, and pressed them upon the King, he expressly states. See also Note 2.

<sup>35</sup> See Notes 2, 33, 34,

<sup>36</sup> American-Spanish war of 1898.

<sup>37</sup> "But we have been from time to time hampered by the fact that in many parts of the world we found ourselves face to face with unprofitable competition, with rivalries which were advantageous to no one, unless, perhaps, to some astute potentate who knew how to take advantage of them." (Lord Lansdowne, Nov. 7). Mr. Balfour's speech is accurately quoted.

<sup>38</sup> Fall of the Lansdowne-Balfour Unionist Government and advent of the Liberals under Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, with Sir Edward Grey as Foreign Secretary.

<sup>39</sup> Serious strikes and revolutionary movements were convulsing Russia as the result of the disastrous war with Japan, and several prominent Ministers had been assassinated.

<sup>40</sup> In *Le Temps* of Dec. 26, The Kaiser is reported to have said to M. Georges Villiers, its correspondent, what is here recalled.

<sup>41</sup> German Constitution, before Revolution: "The executive power is in the Emperor's hands. He represents the Empire internationally, and can declare war, if defensive, and make peace as well as enter into treaties with other nations. For declaring offensive war the consent of the Federal Council must be obtained."

<sup>42</sup> White Book on Morocco.

## PART II.

[1906.]

The Morocco Dispute—The Algeciras Conference—  
Edward and M. Delcassé—Foreign Policy and  
British Court—The Secret Negotiations with  
Belgian General Staff—Unofficial Efforts to improve  
Anglo-German Relations.

## PART II

### Chronology of Principal Events in 1906

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International Conference at Algeciras over Morocco opens

*January.*

Sir Edward Grey, asked by the French Ambassador whether, if the Morocco crisis should lead to war between France and Germany, Britain would give armed support to France, expresses the belief that British public opinion would agree to do so.

Sir Edward Grey expresses the same view to the German Ambassador.

Sir Edward Grey authorises secret collaboration between the British and French military and naval staffs for contingent common action against Germany after consulting the Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and Mr. Asquith and Lord Haldane, but not the Cabinet .....*January.*

British Military Attaché at Brussels discusses secretly with the head of the Belgian Government's Military Staff a plan of campaign for the landing of 100,000 British troops on the French coast, and their transference to Belgium in the event of a German invasion of Belgium. The British military Attaché informs the head of the Belgian General Staff that only Lord Haldane, the head of the British General Staff, and himself were in the secret. The British Cabinet appears to have had no knowledge of these negotiations, which continued from January to April.

[Lord Loreburn ("How the War Came": Methuen, 1919), who was in the Cabinet and on intimate terms with the Prime Minister, declines to believe, without proof, that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman "understood the scope and significance of what was in fact done." Lord Loreburn also points out that many members of the Cabinet were in London, or within an hour of it, at the time, whereas the particular members consulted by Sir Edward Grey were at a distance. He further points out that Mr. Asquith and Lord Haldane, selected by Sir Edward Grey for consultation, were—together with Sir Edward Grey himself—Vice-presidents of the Liberal League, "a continuation of the Liberal Imperialist movement which had supported the South African War and opposed Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman on that subject." Finally, he recalls that Cabinet meetings were regular in December (1905), that two were held in January, 1906, and that from 1st February they were regularly held throughout the year. He adds: "This concealment from the Cabinet was protracted and must have been deliberate. Parliament knew nothing of it till August 3, 1914, nor anything of the change in policy which the suppressed communications denoted." The fighting head of the British Navy at that time, and until 1910, Sir John Fisher, has frankly admitted in his "Memoirs" that he favoured a sudden attack upon the German fleet, "*à la* Copenhagen."]

King Edward VII. sends Lord Esher (permanent member of the Committee of Imperial Defence) to see Mr. Beit about his interview with the German Emperor relative to England's intentions and to Sir John Fisher's plans of making a sudden attack upon the German fleet. ....*January.*

Anglo-French loan of £100,000,000 to Tsardom.....*March.*

King Edward goes to Paris and invites M. Delcassé to breakfast .....*March.*

Close of the International Conference at Algeciras.....*April.*

First Russian *Duma* (Parliament) opened.....*May.*

Ratification by the Sultan of Morocco of the Algeciras Act, "based upon the threefold principles of the sovereignty and independence of his Majesty the Sultan, the integrity of his dominions, and economic liberty without any inequality."

Resumption of British official relations with Serbia: these had been broken off in 1903 after the murder by Serbian officers of the Serbian King and Queen .....*June.*

Russian *Duma* Dissolved .....*July.*

Tariff war between Austria and Serbia. Serbia determines to place large orders for armaments with French armament manufacturers (Creusot). Serbia exports her goods, boycotted by Austria, *via* Salonika, to Egypt and Marseilles. ....*August.*

King Peter of Serbia signs the new Army Expenses and Armament Bill. ....*December.*

DESPATCHES FROM THE BELGIAN *CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES* IN LONDON, THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN PARIS, THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN BERLIN, AND THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN LONDON.

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THE MOROCCO CONFERENCE.

No. 15.

MONSIEUR E. VAN GROOTVEN, *Chargé d'Affaires* in London,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, January 14, 1906.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Notwithstanding the absorbing business of the General Election, everything relating to the approaching Conference of Algeciras is being followed with the greatest interest in England, and people are trying to form some estimate of the spirit in which it will be attended by France and Germany, the two parties principally concerned.

As for England, she continues to be wholeheartedly on the side of France. As Sir Edward Grey said in a speech: "England will do her best to improve her relations with Germany; but such a *rapprochement* must always be dependent upon a good understanding between Germany and France."

The Minister for Foreign Affairs has recently said repeatedly to the various Ambassadors accredited to London that Great Britain was pledged to France so far as Morocco was concerned, and that she would keep her engagements to the letter, even in the eventuality of a Franco-German war, and no matter what it might cost her.

Both the Press and public opinion bear witness to the same sentiments. Allusion is made to the various occasions of friction that have arisen between this country and Germany, particularly in the time of the

Boer War, and it is added that if the Conference of Algeciras, which has been convened at Germany's request, were to be rendered abortive by any fault of hers, then not only would all hope of an Anglo-German *rapprochement* be at an end, but actual enmity would be created between the two countries.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) VAN GROOTVEN.

## KING EDWARD AND M. DELCASSÉ.

No. 16.

MONSIEUR A. LEGHAIT, Belgian Minister in Paris,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *March 6, 1906.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

King Edward VII. arrived in Paris on Saturday evening, and is staying at the English Embassy.

Although his Majesty determined to preserve his incognito, circumstances invest his presence in Paris and the interviews that he has had here with the deepest importance. The King has exchanged visits with the President of the Republic, and has invited him to dinner at the Embassy next Sunday, together with M. Rouvier,<sup>1</sup> and with Baron de Courcel, who is just back from Berlin. Moreover,—and here comes the point of interest,—he received yesterday to breakfast M. Loubet<sup>2</sup> and M. Delcassé.

Such a mark of courtesy to M. Delcassé at this moment has aroused much comment. It is generally regarded as an act of great significance; baffling, indeed, by reason of the possible extent and seriousness of its consequences.<sup>3</sup>

It is natural that the King of England should wish to confer a special mark of favour upon the Minister who has so zealously identified himself with English interests; but in sending for the man whose resignation Germany demanded,<sup>4</sup> King Edward has subscribed afresh to the agreement of April 8, 1904, and given his approval to a policy against which Germany protests, and which has been repudiated by France herself.

Any lingering doubts that might still remain as to Great Britain's intentions are now dispelled; but people are puzzled as to the real purport of so demonstrative an

act. They are doubtful as to its utility or even wisdom under present circumstances, when Germany's difficulties are thickening round her, and when her self-respect would seem already to be sufficiently wounded by the course the Algeciras negotiations are taking.

Fears are felt lest these events, occurring all at once, should provoke a certain irritation that might exercise an unfortunate influence upon the decisions of the Berlin Cabinet, and might prevent them from taking the fully anticipated rebuff of the Conference with all the calmness that would be desirable.

King Edward's action is regarded almost in the light of a deliberate counter to the Emperor William's landing at Tangier; and people attach all the more importance to it, because they cannot imagine that a Sovereign of well-known prudence would decide on such an action without first weighing all its consequences, and being prepared to take the full responsibility. It looks as though the King wished to demonstrate that the policy which called forth Germany's active intervention has nevertheless remained unchanged, because England still holds fast to the same principles by which she was guided in drawing up the agreement of April 8, 1904.

In diplomatic circles this demonstration is considered useless and very dangerous at this moment. In French circles it is not over well received; Frenchmen feeling that they are being dragged against their will in the orbit of English policy, a policy whose consequences they dread, and which they generally condemn by throwing over M. Delcassé.<sup>5</sup>

In short, people fear that this is a sign that England wants so to envenom the situation that war will become inevitable.

Nevertheless, in the official world, and more especially at the Foreign Office, they appear to take the matter very calmly. They treat the King's invitation to M. Delcassé as a perfectly natural outcome of their mutual and friendly relationship of many years' standing; and refuse to see in it anything beyond a desire on the part of the English King to give renewed support to the cause of France at a critical juncture.

It should be noted that, so far, the French Press is dumb about the King's interview with M. Delcassé.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) A. LEGHAIT.

## ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 17.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to BARON DE  
FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, April 5, 1906.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

There has been no opportunity lately of writing to you, except through the post; and I have, therefore, been unable before to-day, to reply to your despatch of May 12, in which you were so good as to communicate to me my Paris colleague's very interesting account of the impression made by the particular attentions with which M. Delcassé was honoured by the King of England during the latter's stay in France.

As I had the honour to inform you in my report of December 24 last, the accession of the Liberal Government to power in England gave keen satisfaction in Berlin. It was expected in official circles here that the new Cabinet would pursue a policy of great friendliness towards France, and work for closer relations with Russia; but without implying hostility towards Germany by either of these tendencies.

One must confess that this hope has not been realised.

The movement for a *rapprochement* with Germany, set going by Lord Avebury, has not been followed up. In response to this friendly overture, several well-known German business men visited London; but scarcely any notice was taken of them when they were there. The newspapers, as far as possible, avoided all mention of them. The English Press has done its very best to render the Conference of Algeciras abortive. It has shown itself even more intractable than the French papers, and has never ceased to spread imaginary accounts of schemes of aggression on the part of Germany that never existed.

At Algeciras, the British Ambassador does not appear to have made the slightest effort to find a solution that would reconcile the views of Germany and France. It was expected, of course, that England would uphold France's policy; but there was nothing in the engagements into which she had entered that need in any way have hindered her from exercising a moderating influence.

All this is scarcely in keeping with the programme laid down by Campbell-Bannerman in his speech at the Albert

Hall on December 21, which I mentioned to you in my aforesaid report.

One is driven to the conclusion that English foreign policy is directed by the King in person, and has not changed with his Majesty's change of advisers.<sup>6</sup>

There is no longer any doubt that it was the King of England, who, working unofficially and apart from his Ministers, egged on M. Delcassé to an aggressive line of policy, and who promised him to land 100,000 English soldiers in Holstein—a promise which, incidentally, he had no power to keep.

The King's invitation to M. Delcassé whilst he was in Paris can be considered in no other light than of challenge.

If any room for doubt remained it has been dispelled by Colonel Barnardiston's extraordinary proceeding towards General Ducarne.<sup>7</sup>

There is undoubtedly in England a Court policy pursued outside and alongside that of the responsible Government.

Fortunately, all these intrigues have not succeeded in disturbing the peace. Germany is isolated. The attitude of Italy is equivocal. Austria-Hungary is paralysed by her domestic difficulties, and unable to come to the assistance of her ally. The lesson to be deduced from the latest occurrences is that Germany, standing alone, is yet able to compel her opponents to treat her with respect, and this is probably the most definite advantage that she has acquired from the Morocco affair.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 18.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *June 23, 1906.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

A small group of people, belonging for the most part to the Liberal Party, headed by Lord Avebury (Sir John Lubbock that was) have long been trying to combat the anti-German spirit still so prevalent in England. Two years ago this group encouraged the sending to Germany of a committee for the study of Local Government. The

mission was organised by Lord Lyveden, and, as you will remember, visited our country also.

This year these same people, in agreement with the German Embassy, have made arrangements in England to welcome a big deputation of Mayors from the German towns. Just now they are entertaining the German pressmen who are visiting London. Nothing is omitted, banquets, speeches by Lord Avebury and Count Metternich, and the regulation visit to all the sights of London.

As for making any real impression the result is practically *nil*. Public opinion is already captured. The English Press has pushed its diatribes against the Kaiser, his Government, and his subjects to such an extent that the public remains suspicious. Germany is the great commercial, military, and perhaps hereafter naval rival. And so every good citizen feels it incumbent upon him to hate Germany, because he tells himself that since Russia's enfeeblement and the Entente with France Germany is the only nation from whom he has anything to fear.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## BRITAIN, GERMANY AND RUSSIA.

No. 19.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *July 16, 1906.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

After his recovery, and before he left for Norderney, the Chancellor invited to his house in turn all the ambassadors accredited to Berlin. In the course of his conversation with the English Ambassador, both expressed the opinion that it would be desirable in the interests of better relations that the Sovereigns should meet. Prince Bulow said, however, that, after what had occurred, the first step should be taken by King Edward VII. The English Ambassador pointed out that a first step in that sense had already been taken. For he had been instructed to inquire what route the German Emperor would follow during his proposed trip to the

Mediterranean, the date of which coincided with the King of England's tour in those regions last spring. But not only had the requested information never been forthcoming, but the Imperial Government had never even let him know that the plan of a Mediterranean trip had been given up.

Since then confidential communications have continued. Apparently letters even have passed between the two Sovereigns.

I did not mention the matter to you before, because I was waiting until I had something definite to communicate. I break silence to-day because some of the papers have announced that the negotiations were concluded, and have even published the place and approximate date of meeting. This news is pure invention. I can assure you from information derived from excellent sources, that it is highly probable the Emperor and the King of England will not meet at all.

Another reason why I was in no hurry to write you, was that I attach very little importance to demonstrations of this sort. How many interviews have we not witnessed during the last few years trumpeted about as brilliant successes, but none of them productive of any lasting result? The cause of the strained relations between Germany and England is not to be sought in the personal feelings of their respective Sovereigns. The latter are dictated by the state of public opinion in both countries. This is very clearly shown by my London colleague's report<sup>1</sup> as to the negative result of the German journalists' visit to England, which you kindly communicated to me in your despatch of July 10. It is popular sentiment, too, that is directing the British Government's policy, which is still as hostile to Germany under the Liberal Ministry as it was when the Unionists were in office. What can the English have to fear from Russia, crumbling to pieces as she is, and yet negotiations towards a *rapprochement* were carried on so long as anyone was left in St. Petersburg who would negotiate. London manifested such a superabundance of zeal in the matter that the Russian Government was obliged to decline with embarrassment the proposed visit of the English Fleet to Kronstadt.

It is quite obvious what Russia stands to gain by friendship with England, but not so easy to see what benefit England can get from friendship with Russia.

What can be their object in London, unless to create enemies for Germany?

What has leaked out of the recent negotiations is of a nature to confirm this suspicion. According to the *Morning Post*, Russia and England aim at coming to an understanding by which both shall consent to the construction of the Mesopotamian railway, on condition that Russia is allowed to connect it up with her railway through the Caucasus, while England has control of the new line from Bagdad to the Persian Gulf. Such an agreement, if concluded, would be the height of impudence. The Sultan is an independent Sovereign. He granted the concession for the Mesopotamian railway to a German bank; and no foreign Power has a right, nor the faintest excuse, for meddling in this purely Turkish affair. Nevertheless, such a scheme is in existence. Lord Lansdowne recently stated in the House of Lords, that in 1903, he had vainly tried to internationalise the Bagdad railway; and from the first England has tried to put stumbling blocks in the way of this undertaking.

She tried to get hold of Koweit, the only natural harbour to which the railway can run, unless an artificial harbour were constructed, and this would be very costly and probably a very unsatisfactory enterprise to undertake in the swamps of the Shat-el-Arab.

She, to say the least, favoured the Arab rising by supplying the insurgents with arms and munitions.

In London they as good as confessed that England, alone of all the great Powers, opposed an increase in the Turkish customs dues, for fear that Turkey should be in a position to give a pledge as guarantee for the mileage return of the railway.

Seven years ago, when the Deutsche Bank obtained the concession of the line, the Bank offered England and France a share in the concern; and this not because the Bank stood in need of foreign capital for the work, which it is quite able to carry out unaided, but in order to avoid international jealousies. France accepted; England refused. There would probably still be a willingness to grant England the share she then scorned to take, and to give her, too, some legitimate way of making her influence felt; but any claim to control the railway without having a financial share in it would doubtless be rejected as quite out of the question.<sup>8</sup>

In spite of the cordial reception given in England to

the German journalists, the German Press has again taken to debating, and in some cases in a surly tone, the question of the Mesopotamian railway.

With or without these periodic reconciliations, of which one gets wearied, it is much to be feared that jealousy and distrust will continue to characterise the normal state of the relations between Germany and England.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

### BRITISH NAVAL ARMAMENTS.

No. 20.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London,  
to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *July 28, 1906.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

After the proposed Army reductions laid before the House of Commons, now it is the turn of the Navy, and here, too, there is an attempt to economise. As a modification of the scheme drawn up by the Balfour Ministry, the present Cabinet inclines to lay down three Dreadnoughts instead of four, two instead of five torpedo boat destroyers, and eight instead of twelve submarines, i.e., to incur an expenditure of £6,800,000 instead of £9,300,000, and so to reduce the Budget for the next few years by £2,500,000. This decision would be announced at the Hague, to show that England favours naval disarmament and the limitation of expenditure. Should her example evoke a response and be followed by others at the Peace Conference of 1907, she would proceed further along the line of reduction. Otherwise, more vessels would be built.

To get this scheme adopted, however, the Secretary for the Admiralty found it necessary to state that if the House sanctioned his programme the naval strength of Great Britain would still be superior to that of the two other biggest navies in the world taken together, and that England would still be without a rival on the seas. The initiative so generously taken by her in the path of reform is thus singularly lessened by the fact that she is running no risk, and reckons on remaining mistress of the seas, as before.

Should the United States, or, above all, should Germany refuse at the Hague to adopt the views put forward by the English delegates, these nations will not fail to be held responsible for obstructing England's humanitarian ideas as preached by the new apostle of peace, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES TO TEXT

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<sup>1</sup> French Premier.

<sup>2</sup> French President.

<sup>3</sup> Refer to Note 16 of Part I. The full significance of the King's act can only be appreciated by surveying the situation at that time as a whole, and this necessitates going into some detail. The question of Morocco *was not an Anglo-French question*, although the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904 treated it as such. It was, and had been since 1880, *an international question*. The published section of the general Anglo-French settlement of 1904, which dealt specifically with Morocco, did no more than recognise a special French interest in that country. This was extremely important as affecting Anglo-French relations, because it announced in the language of diplomacy the abandonment of Britain's traditional policy of upholding Moroccan independence against French encroachment, in return for France's recognition of the British position in Egypt. But it did not bind the rest of the world. While the negotiations were still in process, M. Delcassé had given personal assurances to the German Ambassador that France had no intention of altering the political, territorial or economic status of Morocco. But when the Anglo-French Settlement had been concluded, M. Delcassé, against the advice of the French Ambassador at Berlin, and contrary to accepted diplomatic usage, failed to communicate it to the German Government, although the British Government had communicated to the German Government the section of the Settlement which dealt with Egypt. Thus, from the first, M. Delcassé had adopted the diplomatic attitude that Germany was not concerned with the subject at all. This was gratuitously provocative, because Germany had important interests in Morocco, had long maintained diplomatic and commercial relations with its Government, and had been closely concerned with its diplomatic history since 1880. M. Delcassé pursued the same line when, five months later, he negotiated his Morocco agreement with Spain; he, again, ostentatiously failed to notify the German Government. Shortly afterwards it became apparent through the indiscretion of the French Press and of French politicians, that the published terms of these agreements were a mere blind, and that secret arrangements had been concluded providing for a Franco-Spanish territorial and economic partition of Morocco. The object of M. Delcassé's diplomatic discourtesies then became clear, and the German Government was forced to the conclusion that the fixed intention of Anglo-French diplomacy was to settle the fate of Morocco outside Germany altogether, to treat it, in short, as a matter of Anglo-French interest purely and simply; and that, despite the reiterated public pledges of M. Delcassé to the contrary, France intended to seize the country at the earliest opportunity with the connivance of Britain and Spain.

That conclusion was, of course, accurate. Could Germany, or—the parts being reversed—any great Power similarly situated, have accepted that situation?

When it is borne in mind that Morocco had been for twenty years a periodical theme of discussion between the Powers, and that up to 1900 British policy had been consistently directed to preserving the independence of that country against French intrigue, and had been as consistently supported in that endeavour by Germany, it is impossible to look upon the attitude of Anglo-French diplomacy in 1904 towards Germany otherwise than as indicating a clear purpose, on the part of those responsible for directing it, to run all the risks of a breach with Germany on an issue in which Germany stood for international law and the sanctity of treaties. It is impossible to regard the purpose as other than deliberately determined upon, the facts in themselves not being in dispute. In other words, the British Government of the day thought the recognition by France of a British permanent occupation of Egypt was worth a breach with Germany; and the French Government thought that a French acquisition of Morocco involving British support for France was worth risking a rupture with Germany.

Germany took up the challenge. There was nothing else for her to do short of retiring from the field altogether, and it is difficult to see how any Government could have been expected to do that under the circumstances. The challenge came in the shape of the Kaiser's visit to Tangier and the request for a new International Conference, which Germany was absolutely within her rights, and supported by international treaty obligations, in demanding. We know what ensued. Anglo-French diplomacy resisted the demand for a conference to the uttermost. The British officially inspired Press, led by the *Times*, conducted a violent campaign against Germany. The situation became highly critical. M. Delcassé's colleagues drew back from the abyss and, at a Cabinet Council held in June, 1905, declined to follow him in his persistent opposition to a conference, although informed by him that if they did so and a war ensued, Britain was prepared to come to the armed assistance of France. The French Cabinet was not divided. *M. Delcassé found himself absolutely alone, and resigned.* In other words, the French Government decided against war, and in doing so it had the undoubted support of public opinion. (1)

Eight months after this event King Edward VII. goes to Paris and ostentatiously invites M. Delcassé to breakfast—i.e., goes out of his way to honour the politician who had unsuccessfully urged upon his colleagues, eight months before, a policy which, if persisted in, would have brought war. The effect upon Anglo-German relations of the King's action can easily be surmised—especially when we bear in mind that the German Government was, of course, aware (a) of the nature of M. Delcassé's communication to the French Cabinet in June, 1905; (b) that Sir

<sup>1</sup> A Frenchman who published a remarkably prophetic pamphlet in 1911, M. François Delaisie, remarks of this Cabinet meeting: "For two hours M. Delcassé explained all his intrigues to his astounded colleagues, and with calm audacity urged the continuation of the policy of 'encirclement,' of military alliance with England, and of war with Germany. Rouvier and his colleagues unanimously answered by getting rid of this dangerous man. . . ." ("La Guerre qui vient.")

Edward Grey had told the German Ambassador in London in January, 1906, that British public opinion would support British armed intervention on behalf of France in the event of a war over Morocco; (c) that King Edward VII. and Sir John Fisher had been discussing the "Copenhaging" of the German fleet and a descent upon German territory; and (d) was probably aware of the negotiations between the British Military Attaché at Brussels and the head of the Belgian General Staff, seeing that they had evidently formed the subject of communications between the Belgian Government and its diplomatic representatives abroad, as these despatches show. (Note 7).

<sup>4</sup> No proof, so far as I know, has ever been adduced to show that the German Government ever "demanded" the resignation of M. Delcassé. That he became *persona non grata* with the German Government is obvious. But it is inconceivable that any French Government would have bowed the knee to a positive summons of such a character. M. Delcassé's position as Foreign Minister had simply become untenable by his own proceedings. The whole situation, even within the French Cabinet, was, of course, unreal and vitiated by the fact that many of M. Delcassé's colleagues—probably the bulk of them—were entirely ignorant of the secret clauses attached to the Anglo-French agreement, just as they were of the Franco-Spanish Secret Convention. These secret instruments, it may be recalled, were only published in November, 1911—*six years after the events we are now chronicling*. When they appeared two of M. Delcassé's colleagues in the 1904-1905 Cabinet, the Minister of Marine and the Colonial Minister, *publicly stated that they then learned of them for the first time, having been kept wholly in the dark*. M. Delaisie suggests that M. Rouvier, the Prime Minister, was ignorant of them until the crisis occurred with Germany.<sup>1</sup> Whether Mr. Balfour and Lord Lansdowne acted similarly towards the Unionist Cabinet in 1904 I do not know. Nor am I aware whether the Liberal Cabinet, which came into Power in December, 1905, was then, or at a subsequent period, apprised of these secret documents: although Sir Edward Grey would, of course, be acquainted with them. M. Delcassé treated the French Cabinet in 1904-05 over these secret Treaty arrangements exactly as Sir Edward Grey treated the British Cabinet in 1905-06 and for several years afterwards, over his statements to the French Ambassador and his authorisation of secret "conversations" between the British and French military and naval staffs.

A more accurate description of the French Cabinet situation is given in the paragraph of the Belgian despatch marked (5). As a matter of fact the French Premier, who did not want war, had apparently felt compelled, in view of M. Delcassé's intolerant attitude, to enter into direct relations with the German Ambassador in Paris, even before M. Delcassé's resignation. The lengths to which the journalists, inspired by the British and French Foreign Offices, were prepared to go at that time may be gauged by the Paris dispatch in the *Times* of May 16 (1905), which stated the "general feeling" in Paris to be that "whoever might succeed M. Delcassé would be the nominee of the German Emperor"! M. Delcassé's successor was M. Rouvier, the Premier! Against

<sup>1</sup> "La guerre qui vient" (Paris: 1911)

this outrageous suggestion may be set the verdict of M. Francis de Préssensé, the greatest French journalist of his day. Speaking of M. Delcassé's resignation, he said that M. Delcassé fell:

"not, as some singularly ill-advised friends have tried to make out, because the greatness of his policy displeased the Kaiser, or because Nicholas II. ordered a too docile Republic to desist from putting a statesman of such commanding proportions between the sun and his Imperial Majesty, but simply because he had at one and the same time been unfaithful to the avowed principles of his own policy, to the law of ministerial solidarity and to the supreme law of Parliamentary responsibility."

The simple fact was that M. Delcassé was for pursuing a policy *which meant war with Germany*, in which he was supported by those directing British foreign policy. His colleagues were not.

<sup>5</sup> See Note 4.

<sup>6</sup> "The wearer of the crown of England plays in foreign affairs a part more personal than in other matters is that of the constitutional King." [Sir Charles Dilke: "Life of Sir Charles Dilke." Gwynn and Tuckwell.]

<sup>7</sup> This refers to the British Military Attaché's negotiations with the Belgian General Staff as regards the landing of a British force in France and its transfer to Belgium in the event of war. A marginal note on the first report states: "The entry of the English into Belgium would only be made after the violation of our neutrality by Germany." This reference to the matter by the Belgian Minister at Berlin suggests that the Belgian Foreign Office must have kept its representatives thoroughly informed of the incident: for the "conversations" between the British Military Attaché began in January and were still continuing at the time this despatch was written. The reference itself is curious. What appealed to Baron Greindl (the Belgian Minister at Berlin) as an "extraordinary proceeding" does not seem to have struck the Belgian Chief of Staff in that light.

[See Diplomatic Documents. European War. T. Fisher Unwin, 1915. 1s. See also Lord Loreburn's "How the War Came."]

Lord Haldane's treatment of this incident in his book "Before the War" (Cassell, 1920) is singular and rather characteristic. There were two sets of "conversations." The first took place in January, 1906, between Colonel Barnardiston, then British Military Attaché in Brussels, and the chief of the Belgian General Staff, and continued for some months: i.e., these earlier conversations were contemporary with the "conversations" between the British and French General Staffs, authorised by Sir E. Grey. They occurred immediately the Liberal Cabinet assumed office. It is to these earlier "conversations," of course, that the Belgian Minister is referring in this despatch. But in April, 1912—*six years after this despatch was written*—further conversations took place between the then British Military Attaché, Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges, and the Belgian Minister of War, in the course of which—according to the document found by the Germans in Brussels and published—the British Military Attaché told the Belgian Minister of War that if war had ensued in the recent crisis (the

crisis over Morocco in the summer of 1911) the British Government would have landed troops in Belgium, even if the Belgians had not asked for help. The Belgian Minister of War protested that the consent of the Belgian Government would be necessary, to which Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges replied that as Belgium was not in a position to stop the Germans from passing through, "Great Britain would have landed her troops in any event."

In addition to these military "conversations," the Belgian Minister at Berlin—Baron Greindl, the writer of the despatch we are now commenting on—sent to his Government on *December 23, 1911*, a despatch, in which he gives his reasons for believing that Britain might be the first Power to violate Belgian neutrality in the event of war, and refers in that connection to the "perfidious and disingenuous" revelations of Colonel Barnardiston five years before.

Now Lord Haldane's method of dealing with these three distinct and separate records is to fasten upon Baron Greindl's despatch of *December 23, 1911*, and in such a way as to convey to the uninstructed reader that the whole point at issue is the credibility of Baron Greindl *versus* the credibility of himself, Colonel Barnardiston and Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges as to a potential British violation of Belgian neutrality. He says that Colonel Barnardiston denies the "legend" set on foot by Baron Greindl, i.e., the legend of a plan "to invade Belgium, and, if necessary, to violate her neutrality, in order to make an expedition the purpose of which was to attack Germany through that country." He says that he, Lord Haldane, never either suggested or heard of such a plan. But, in his despatch of *December 23, 1911*, Baron Greindl does not contend that such a plan was revealed by Colonel Barnardiston. Baron Greindl is referring to the secret conversations between the latter and the Chief of the Belgian General Staff, held five years previously (the conversations referred to in the despatch to which the present foot-note is attached), and *he is giving his own views as to possible British action in the future*. Now Lord Haldane implicitly admits that such "conversations" did take place in 1906. The "legend" he attacks is, therefore, *the view of British policy enunciated by Baron Greindl in 1911*. Colonel Barnardiston's denial is, therefore, altogether beside the point. In coupling Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges' denial with Baron Greindl's *opinions*, Lord Haldane throws dust in the eyes of the reader. Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges' conversations with the Belgian General Jungbluth took place on April 23, 1912, *four months after Baron Greindl's despatch!*

By this clever manipulation Lord Haldane avoids a direct denial of the statements attributed to Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges by General Jungbluth, the authenticity of whose published Memorandum Lord Haldane carefully refrains from questioning, which would have been a venturesome proceeding, seeing that it is reproduced in the Belgian Grey Book itself. (*See Appendix to Belgian Grey Book: see also Lord Loreburn's "How the War Came," pp. 82-85 and 88-89, and Lord Haldane's "Before the War," pp. 180-2.*)

<sup>8</sup> Germany's interests in Turkish railways originated with an Englishman—Mr. James Alexander, through whom Dr. Siemens, of the Deutsche Bank, came into the venture. Through Mr. Alexander the Deutsche Bank acquired the Angora concession

(Ismid-Angora-Adena) in 1888. In 1899 the Deutsche Bank and the Durttenbergische Vereins Bank formed the Ottoman Society of Anatolian Railways. Before that date the Germans had taken no interest whatever in any Turkish railways—Bismarck consistently opposing the one or two tentative efforts put forward in that direction. In 1899 the Germans obtained from the Sultan the right to continue the Anatolian railway system, which they had thus successfully inaugurated, to Bagdad and the Persian Gulf. Previous to 1888 the British Government and British financiers had endeavoured on various occasions to get a concession for a line from Suedia (or Alexandretta) to Bagdad, but Russian and French diplomacy had successfully opposed these attempts.

Just as the French and Russians had opposed British enterprise, so the French and British opposed German enterprise. The long and bitter opposition to the German enterprise by the French and British imperialists was a pendant to the Moroccan question in exacerbating the feeling between the three countries. (See "The Railway System in Asiatic Turkey": "Le Chemin de Fer de Bagdad, 1913." etc.)

### PART III.

[1907.]

King Edward VII. and British Foreign Policy—Anglo-Franco-German Relations—Growing Nearness of Anglo-Russian Relations—General Bailloud's Speech—The French and the Algeciras Act—The "Isolation" of Germany—King Edward's visits to the King of Spain and the King of Italy—The Franco-Japanese and Anglo-Franco-Spanish Agreements—The Influence of the Northcliffe Press—Visit of British Pressmen to Germany—Belgian Diplomatist's Tribute to Sir Frank Lascelles—Herr von Mühlenberg on German Policy—The Second Hague Conference—The Kaiser comes to London.

## PART III.

### Chronology of Principal Events in 1907.

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Russian reaction in full swing : Second Duma opened (March) and dissolved (June) : third " tame " Duma elected (August)...

*January-August.*

King Edward in Paris .....*February.*

Triumph of the " Right " in the German elections...*February.*

Visit of Russian squadron to Portsmouth.....*March.*

French occupation of Udja in Morocco.....*March*

Anglo-Russian negotiations over Persia .....  
(*Throughout the spring and summer*).

Interview between German Chancellor and Italian Foreign Minister at Rapallo .....*April.*

King Edward, accompanied by Sir Charles Hardinge, permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, visits the King of Spain at Carthagena.....*April.*

Meeting between King Edward and the King of Italy at Gaeta .....*April.*

A party of British journalists visits Germany and is entertained by the Government authorities .....*May.*

Franco-Spanish and Anglo-Spanish agreements to " preserve the status quo in the Mediterranean ".....*June.*

Franco-Japanese agreement to " preserve the integrity of China." .....*June.*

Second Hague Peace Conference .....*June-October.*

Anglo-Russian agreement dividing Persia into spheres of economic influence. ....*August*

French bombard Casablanca in Morocco .....*August.*

German Emperor and Empress, accompanied by Chancellor, come to England.....*October*

DESPATCHES FROM THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN  
PARIS, THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN LONDON,  
THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN BERLIN, AND THE  
BELGIAN *CHARGE D'AFFAIRES* IN LONDON.

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ANGLO-FRENCH RELATIONS.

No. 21.

MONSIEUR A. LEGHAIT, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *February 4, 1907.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

The King and Queen of England arrived in Paris, incognito, on Saturday night. They are staying at the Embassy, and will be there until February 9. This sudden journey was only decided upon within the last few days, and was something of a surprise even to the Government of the Republic.<sup>1</sup> M. Pichon yesterday evening confessed to his intimate friends that he was astonished, and could not conceive what could be the object of it. So far, no special motive has been assigned to this visit. But it looks as though it must be of a political nature, and all the more important because unspecified. It is undoubtedly too soon yet to estimate the significance of this journey or to forecast its consequences. One can only make conjectures as to its significance from the general political situation, and from the actual state of affairs in France. For some years past the Government of the Republic has cordially, one might say enthusiastically, welcomed England's overtures; and England has very judiciously allowed M. Delcassé and his successors to have all the credit of the *entente cordiale*. Indeed, this understanding was regarded by the vast majority of Frenchmen as affording very valuable moral and material support for the maintenance of France's prestige and the safeguarding of her interests.

M. Clemenceau's accession to power<sup>2</sup> marked the culmination of England's influence. The London Cabinet imagined that they had in him a man absolutely bound up with English policy, and of a character sufficiently determined and energetic to insist on its being adopted. Apparently the hopes centred in him have considerably dwindled. Anxiety is beginning to be experienced at the lack of system in his administration and his powerlessness to check disorganisation in France—a powerlessness that becomes every day more apparent. On the other hand, apart from disappointment as to the part played by M. Clemenceau, there have been many signs to suggest that French public opinion is growing doubtful about the advantage to be obtained from the *entente cordiale*, and that it is beginning to manifest a desire that France should free herself of British meddlesomeness. The blind readiness to follow in England's wake has, quite recently, met with some opposition—an opposition still halting and not openly expressed, but nevertheless possessed of considerable significance. English advice and English plans no longer seem so disinterested as they did at first; and the result is that there is growing up a party which is determined to shake off the yoke of this foreign influence, and to give France a greater and more honourable liberty of action, whilst still maintaining the most friendly relationships with her neighbour across the Channel. I have reason to believe that the tendencies of English policy in Africa, and especially her attitude towards the Congo State,<sup>3</sup> have had something to do with the suspicious tone of feeling here.

It is not surprising, therefore, in view of these circumstances, that King Edward should desire to come over and confer with the members of the French Government, and re-establish the influence which he finds himself in some danger of losing. One wonders what will be the upshot of this new effort, and whether it will not be regarded in the light of bringing undue pressure to bear, thus strengthening the incipient reaction against all this suspicious foreign meddling.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) A. LEGHAIT.

## ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 22.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *February 8, 1907.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

United by their common dislike of the Emperor William, people here, on the eve of the recent German elections, were reckoning on the success of the parties opposed to the Government and to the triumph of the Socialist elements; indeed one might say that the public, without distinction of parties, was hoping for that result. Even the Conservative Press, which is pre-eminently anti-Socialist, announced with ill-concealed satisfaction that the Social-Democrats were about to impose a check on the imperial policy at home and in the colonies. The Liberal and Radical newspapers foretold that the attempts at personal government, so dangerous to the peace of Europe, would be branded by the whole German nation united at the polling booths, and that things were going to happen which would at last bring the Kaiser and his too complaisant Chancellor to their senses. As for the English Socialists, they had absolute confidence in the success of their German comrades.

The verdict of the German electors has been received with scarcely concealed vexation.<sup>4</sup> It has been a revelation to the English to find how popular the Kaiser still is, for they cherished the fond delusion, zealously fostered by the Press, that the Emperor has few friends, had lost credit, and therefore was less to be feared. Yesterday the *Morning Post* had a leading article (herewith enclosed) headed "*Caveant Consules.*" The opposition papers conjure the British Government, though for the time being anti-militarist, to hold itself in readiness for any emergency and not, from any motive of economy, to persevere in their programme of reducing the Navy at a moment when the German Emperor may be tempted to launch out into an aggressive foreign policy on the strength of his regained popularity.

The recent speech of his Imperial Majesty is described as "menacing."<sup>5</sup> One must, of course, make allowances for the necessities of current Parliamentary politics. The

Opposition probably think that the Emperor's words, coming on top of his success at the elections, can be turned to account in their struggle with Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's Government, inasmuch as the Government proposes to bring forward the question of limitation of armaments at the Hague, and is constantly whittling away the Army effectives and delaying the construction of battleships. The Liberals, on their part, are never sympathetic towards personal government, and the Labour Party is always inclined to resent any set-back to Socialism on the Continent. At any rate, the public seem to be disappointed at the results of the elections, and that anti-German feeling, which I have often had the honour to mention to you, and which is inspired by fear and jealousy, has so far lost nothing of its force.<sup>6</sup>

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## THE KAISER'S ORATORY.

No. 23.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *February 9, 1907.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I was very much surprised to see that the respectable papers abroad were attributing a bellicose meaning to the short address made by the Emperor, on February 5, to the crowd which gathered to cheer him when the principal results of the polling were declared. I had the honour to forward you the text of this address in my report of the day before yesterday. Nobody here has dreamed of interpreting His Majesty's words as implying any sort of threat towards foreign Powers. His Majesty's usual style is too well-known for anyone to mistake the meaning of what he said.<sup>7</sup> Nor does the sincerity of His Majesty's pacific intention admit of any doubt. It has been sufficiently attested during a reign of 18 years.

It seems to me that abroad, too, they ought to know how to take it. Indeed I am wondering whether the alarm that is manifested can be really quite genuine. Is it not rather a continuation of that campaign of calumny which

was started years ago by the Press of Paris, London and St. Petersburg; and in which *Le Temps*—the official organ of the French Foreign Office—has peculiarly distinguished itself during the last few weeks?

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## KING EDWARD'S DIPLOMACY.

No. 24.

MONSIEUR A. LEGHAIT, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *February 10, 1907.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

The English Sovereigns left Paris yesterday to return to London. They preserved their incognito, and except for the luncheon given in their honour by the French President they have not come into contact with the official world.

Whilst in Paris, the King and Queen called upon their friends, frequented the studios, the theatres, and restaurants like ordinary mortals. The public were enchanted by this affable, good-natured behaviour.

In official spheres the King has apparently managed to strengthen still further the bonds of sympathy between the two countries, by laying stress on his pacific policy and by enlarging on the reasons which make the entente cordiale the corner-stone of that policy, inasmuch as it guarantees the balance of power in Europe.

In his conversations with M. Clemenceau and the Secretary for War, the King insisted upon maintaining the strength of the French forces by land and sea.

He made Prince Radolin<sup>8</sup> the most tranquilising assurances, and told him that the only object of his journey was to please the Queen, who had not been to Paris for a long while. Nothing, in fact, has so far transpired to indicate any discussion of important questions, or that any precise agreement was arrived at on any special question.

The general opinion, therefore, still is that the King in coming to Paris merely wished to emphasise the fact that the harmony between France and England is

unimpaired, and that Germany, a little intoxicated by her election triumphs, must not forget this fact.

One cannot conceal from oneself that these tactics, though their ostensible object is to prevent war, are likely to arouse great dissatisfaction in Berlin, and to stir up a desire to risk anything that may enable Germany to burst the ring which England's policy is tightening round her.

One wonders what the British Government's real object is in thus provoking the ill-will of the German Emperor. It is unlikely that there is anything in it beyond a symptom of the lack of cordiality which exists between uncle and nephew.

I fancy that the French Government would not have been sorry to have been spared this latest English visit, and that the feeling is that France is shouldering rather too much responsibility for Anglo-German antipathies.

France, while sincerely desiring to maintain peace and to improve her relations with Germany, will need all her diplomacy to convince Berlin that the entente cordiale has nothing in it to which Germany can object, and that it has not been concluded for the purpose of hindering Germany's expansion.

People here are so much alive to the delicacy of the situation and to the fact that they have been drawn into a dangerous game, that all the official or responsible papers maintain silence as to the situation, and not one of them ventures to express any pleasure at this new mark of England's friendship.

On the other hand, we have just seen M. Pichon maintaining in the Chamber, against the Socialists, the utility and solidity of the Russian alliance.<sup>9</sup>

It is plain that a mere nothing would suffice to create a state of friction, and that the greatest prudence is indispensable, especially at a moment when Conservatism is triumphant in Germany, and when German opinion might perhaps be easily stirred up against Radical and Socialist France.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) A. LEGHAIT.

## ANGLO-RUSSIAN RELATIONS.

No. 25.

MONSIEUR E. DE CARTIER, Belgian *Chargé d'Affaires* in London, to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, March 28, 1907.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Since the conduct of the Russian Foreign Office has been entrusted to Monsieur Isvolsky there has been a marked *rapprochement* between the Cabinets of St. James and St. Petersburg, and it seems likely that an agreement is on the point of being reached over questions on which as much as two years ago no agreement seemed possible.<sup>10</sup>

The Dogger Bank incident, the sympathy shown by Britain to Japan at the time of the war of 1904, the keen competition in Persia, all are things of the past; and, if certain indications are to be trusted, English diplomacy, whose whole effort is directed to the isolation of Germany, seems likely to present us in the immediate future with the spectacle of an Anglo-Russian Entente.

In 1905 the reception of the French Fleet in England was the premonitory signal of the entente cordiale; and so, by analogy, one may see in the hospitality that is now being accorded at Portsmouth to a Russian squadron, the precursor of more cordial relations with Russia.<sup>11</sup>

Courtesy visits have been exchanged between the Russian and English admirals; and Sir D. H. Bosanquet, Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, has given a banquet in honour of the foreign squadron. In a telegram from King Edward to the Admiralty one day, His Majesty formulated the wish that some of the Russian naval officers and crew should pay a visit to London. In consequence of this twenty officers and some hundred men came to the capital the day before yesterday by special train, and are the guests of the Admiralty. There have been the regular lunches, dinners, and fetes, attended by personages high up in the Foreign Office and Admiralty. The crowd gave the Russian sailors an ovation when they visited the Alhambra, and cheered them on their arrival at the station. The newspapers unanimously congratulate themselves upon this reception, and do not fail to draw the readers' attention to the parallel between

these present rejoicings and the welcome given to the French sailors.

The *Times* points out that a *rapprochement* between England and Russia was moreover an "inevitable corollary" to the entente cordiale: and that a further corollary, at a more distant date, must be a close *rapprochement* between the two countries of France and Japan—one so strong as to be unassailable and to secure to the whole world the blessings of an era of peace and prosperity.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) E. DE CARTIER.

## FRANCE, GERMANY AND MOROCCO.

No. 26.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, March 28, 1907.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

By the Act of Algeciras, France, as well as all the other Powers concerned, promised to respect the independence of the Sultan of Morocco. This has not prevented the French Minister for Foreign Affairs telling my colleagues in Paris that the Sultan is a puppet, who has nothing to do but to obey the instructions of the Diplomatic Corps. Neither has it prevented a French company, under the protection of the French Government, from setting up a wireless telegraphy station in Morocco, in defiance of the Sultan's suzerain rights—and despite his protests.

The Act of Algeciras declares the absolute equality of all parties, except as regards the police and the bank.

The wording of the text is perfectly clear; and yet M. Piehon reads into it that in every matter France is to be regarded as supreme.

The Act of Algeciras guarantees the system of the open door. Yet in Paris even the most honourable and unimpeachable attempt at competition is treated as an insult to France and stigmatised as an intrigue.

The Act of Algeciras solemnly affirms the integrity of the territory of Morocco. But the French Cabinet Council, taking the assassination of Dr. Mauchamp as a pretext, have unanimously voted the occupation of Udja, a town within the territory of Morocco, and are

holding it as a hostage for the punishment of the assassins and for the indemnity to be paid, although they cannot cite a single fact to show that the Sultan is in any way inclined to evade his obligations. The French Government says, it is true, that Udja will be evacuated so soon as they have received satisfaction; but the way in which they keep the engagements entered into at Algeciras shows how much reliance is to be placed in the promises of the French.<sup>12</sup>

France's insolence is reverting to what it was in the worst days of the Second Empire, and it is due to the *entente cordiale*.

It has gone up another degree since the negotiations between London and St. Petersburg seem likely to result in an understanding, for France cannot have been ignorant of them.<sup>13</sup>

If it were only a question of matters that were being officially negotiated between the Cabinets—Egypt, Morocco, the New Hebrides, the Newfoundland Fisheries, Persia; Afghanistan, Thibet—in that case we could only rejoice at the elimination of a possible *casus belli* among the Great Powers. But at the bottom of every settlement that has been made, or is going to be made, there lurks always that hatred of Germany; a hatred kept alive in Paris by the still vivid memory of France's humiliation in 1870, and in London inspired by jealousy of Germany's industrial development and her commercial and maritime expansion. In St. Petersburg it is based on nothing at all, except perhaps prejudice, and the fact that the boundless vanity of the Slav is wounded by a comparison between German civilisation and Muscovite barbarism. It is a sequence of the campaign very cleverly conducted with the object of isolating Germany, and which opened with the reconciliation between France and Italy and the agreement with the latter country—into which England also entered—relative to affairs in the Mediterranean.<sup>14</sup>

I do not say that there is, here and now, between the Cabinets an actual coalition with the object of attacking Germany. Germany is quite big enough to protect herself, and even the most courageous must shrink from the responsibility of a war whose issue is more than doubtful. But one must remember that not all recent wars have been decreed by the Governments. They have been forced upon the Governments by popular movements; and the new grouping of the European Powers

is of a sort to urge public opinion along a dangerous path.<sup>15</sup> Already its effects are perceptible.

The French Press is unanimous in making Germany responsible for the assassination of Dr. Mauchamp, and regarding it as the outcome of influences emanating from Berlin. Would it not be more logical to attribute the unrest among the natives of Morocco to the cynical behaviour of France and England in bartering away what does not belong to them, and conspiring to turn Morocco into a French colony.

Replying to a toast in which Colonel Goepp lamented having to retire from the army before the day of *la Revanche*, a French General, in command of an army corps, publicly said that war between France and Germany was inevitable.<sup>16</sup> General Bailloud is punished by the French Government transferring him to another command, carefully explaining, however, at the same time, that the officer's speech was not the sole, nor even the chief cause of the change. He was removed from Nancy because of insubordinate behaviour towards the War Office.

The English Press is carrying on its campaign of calumny more implacably than ever. It sees the finger of Germany in anything that goes contrary to English wishes. When necessary it invents the whole story, as in the imaginary proposal to close the Baltic Sea. All this is going on at the very moment when England is flinging a torch of discord into the Hague Conference by insisting on discussing, not her own disarmament, but that of her adversaries—entailing a diminution of the safety of Europe.<sup>17</sup>

Hitherto the German Press has confined itself to chronicling facts, and the officially inspired papers point out how absurd it is to saddle Germany with responsibility for a crime that she deplores just as much as the French, and which affects all Europeans, no matter what their nationality. They abstain, however, from the kind of comments which I have been making, although they must be self-evident to them. It is plain that Germany desires above everything to avoid reopening the Morocco question, however she may suffer from the encroachments of France. M. Delcassé has resigned; but he has bequeathed his political tradition to his successors.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## FRANCE AND THE ALGECIRAS ACT.

No. 27.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, April 8, 1907.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

As I had the honour to inform you a few days ago, my opinion has been, ever since I took cognisance of the Act of Algeciras, that France had no intention of giving up her design of getting possession of Morocco, but was only postponing it until a more favourable date. She has obtained the control of the police, and the preponderant influence in the Bank. She has an immense common frontier inhabited by turbulent tribes who will give endless excuses for intervention. If need be she will invent excuses, as she did before in Tunis.<sup>18</sup> She has an army ever ready in Algeria. Thus she has at her disposal the means of realising her ambitious projects. If I had ever fondly imagined that the promises made at Algeciras would be faithfully kept, I should have been disillusioned by the attitude of the French Government over the selection of a Director of Public Works, by the occupation of Udja, and by a recent article in *Le Temps*.

That inspired organ of the Foreign Office, commenting on Prince Bülow's interview with M. Tittoni<sup>19</sup> at Rapallo, says that Berlin does not seem to understand that any agreement between France and Germany is only possible on the following basis: France on her part must make concessions with regard to the Bagdad Railway; whilst Germany must pledge herself to acquiesce in the policy towards Morocco as laid down by the treaty of April 8, 1904.

An inspired telegram from Berlin, which appeared the day before yesterday in No. 362 of the *Koelnische Zeitung*, says in reply that *Le Temps* seems strangely forgetful of the fact, that since the treaty of April 8, 1904, the Algeciras agreement has created a new state of affairs, and one which cannot be altered by an agreement concluded between France and Germany alone. This semi-official message says: "Berlin quite understands that France's geographical position induces her to try and acquire a special standing in Morocco. Germany has no idea of disputing it, and it has been recognised by the Act of Algeciras. It is not easy to see how Germany could go

further than that, and be expected to associate herself with the policy embodied in the Anglo-French convention. The French policy in Morocco suffers from the idea prevalent in France that there is some antagonism between Germany and France in Morocco. Under the sway of this preconceived notion people in France attribute to German policy designs of which it is totally innocent. At Algeciras it was pointed out over and over again that Germany has nothing in view but her economic interests, and it is difficult to understand how France can oppose them if she honestly desires to respect the principle of the open door, so solemnly enunciated. The situation would soon be cleared up if people in France would lay aside this preconceived idea, which is devoid of any foundation."<sup>20</sup>

The inspired message goes on to say that it is not very obvious what concession France could make to Germany in the matter of the Bagdad railway. It is bound to be constructed some day or other, and Germany is not in any hurry, as people seem to think. Besides, the construction of the railway is a Turkish affair, which only concerns Germany in that the concession for it has been formally granted to a financial group in which German capital preponderates.<sup>21</sup>

As your Excellency perceives, France is arrogating to herself, as she did before 1870, the right to intervene in matters with which she has absolutely no concern; and she imagines that she has a right of veto over any agreements made between independent Powers.

We have had experience to our cost<sup>22</sup> of this reversion to the traditions of the Second Empire, or rather to those of customary French policy. Each time in history that France has felt herself strong enough to do so, she has tried to assert a world-supremacy. And the entente cordiale with England is now emboldening her to assume this attitude.

Instances accumulate. You know that Denmark is a Free Trade country absolutely. Her customs dues are purely for purposes of revenue. She is intending to reduce them still lower; and in order that the receipts of the Treasury may not suffer by this, it is proposed to increase the tax on wines, but only to a very slight extent. Nothing could be more reasonable. Wine is an article of luxury, and it is quite fair to ask that the well-to-do classes should sacrifice something for the sake of benefiting

the whole community. Nevertheless, I have learned, indirectly, but from an absolutely reliable source, that the French Minister at Copenhagen has made representations to the Danish Government, couched in most imperious language, accompanied by threats of reprisals. This action on the part of France is all the more extraordinary because Denmark is not bound to France by any treaty, and because the French Customs Tariff puts prohibitive dues upon agricultural produce, which constitute Denmark's sole articles of export.

What has occurred at Brussels,<sup>23</sup> Berlin, and Copenhagen, are, perhaps, not the only instances. It is probable that in other places, too, France has gone back to her old ways, is disregarding every promise that she finds inconvenient, and is everywhere trying to impose her own will.

I have the honour to remain, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

### KING EDWARD IN SPAIN.

No. 28.

MONSIEUR E. CARTIER, Belgian *Chargé d'Affaires* in London, to BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, April 12, 1907.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Public opinion has followed with modified interest the various movements of their Majesties the King and Queen during their visit to the Spanish watering places, and seems for the moment to be paying little heed to all those contingencies of a political nature which may result from this meeting between the sovereigns of Spain and England.<sup>24</sup>

This indifference, which may be more apparent than real, seems at first sight strange when compared with the enthusiasm aroused by the movements that heralded the Anglo-French Entente; but it is easily explained by the state of mind prevalent just now in political circles as well as throughout the nation as a whole.

The English are getting more and more into the habit of regarding international problems as being almost exclusively within the province of King Edward, for whose

profound political instinct and fertile diplomacy they, very rightly, feel great respect. The most obvious proof of this attitude of mind is the total absence of discord between the two great historic parties in all matters relating to England's political destinies. It is this fact which makes it possible for Sir Edward Grey to carry on Lord Lansdowne's work without hesitation and without incident.

Confiding, on the one hand, in the enlightened judgment and happy tact of the King, and relying besides upon the capacity of the Minister entrusted with the care of its international interests, public opinion is disinteresting itself more and more from questions of high policy, knowing by experience that the destinies of the Empire are in good hands.

The interview at Carthagena must have been of real political interest, and one may guess that the Morocco question was the subject of an interchange of views between the sovereigns and also between the statesmen who accompanied them. Sir Charles Hardinge, for instance, who is Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, accompanied King Edward on this tour, and one may be allowed to assume that in conversing with the Spanish ministers he will have been able to allay any anxiety that may have been created at Madrid by the occupation of Udja.<sup>25</sup>

King Edward's visit to his royal nephew at Carthagena was no doubt specially inspired by the desire to strengthen the ties that unite Spain to Great Britain, and as much as possible to weaken German influence at Madrid. As yet, however, there has been no sign from which we may deduce the practical results of this interview, nor any of the decisions arrived at.

I have the honour to remain, etc.,

(Signed) ED. CARTIER.

## "ENCIRCLING" GERMANY.

No. 29.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
BARON DE FAVEREAU, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

BERLIN, April 18, 1907.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch of April 15, in which you were so kind as to communicate

to me the interesting report sent you on the 8th of this month by my colleague in Madrid.

Of the three possible explanations of the interview at Carthagena submitted to you by Baron Joostens,<sup>26</sup> the last is the most probable. Indeed, one may see that it is a certainty.

Like the treaty of alliance with Japan, the entente cordiale with France, and the negotiations pending with Russia, the King of England's visit to the King of Spain is one of the moves in the campaign to isolate Germany that is being personally directed with as much perseverance as success by his Majesty King Edward VII.

England can hardly expect Spain to give any material aid. According to a newspaper report, England has promised to assist in reconstructing the Spanish fleet and fortifying the Iberian Coast. The creation of a fleet is a wearisome affair, difficult anywhere, but especially in a country whose finances are exhausted, and where not only the ministers, but the heads of departments also are continually being changed. England does not need Spain's assistance for the concentration of her fleet in the Channel and North Sea without compromising her position in the Mediterranean. Since she has made friends with France there is no one left to endanger her position there.

Still, in spite of Spain's military and financial impotence, an entente with the Peninsula is not without its advantages. We have just had proof of this at Algeciras, at Tangier, and—quite recently—in the support given by the Cabinet at Madrid to the English proposal for the limitation of armaments. It is not easy to estimate the motives which have induced Spain to embark on the Morocco business in the wake of France and Russia. Did she imagine that France seriously and honestly intended to let her share her influence in Morocco? Or did she recognise that she must renounce for ever her ancient aspirations, and content herself with at least saving appearances?<sup>27</sup>

However that may be, the understanding between Spain on one side, and England and France on the other, is no new thing. The interview at Carthagena simply confirms it, and, in all probability, consolidates a state of things that already existed.

Neither is anything to be learned from the visit which the King of England is to pay to-day to the King of Italy at Gaeta. Italy's understanding with England and

France is a fact, too, despite the Triple Alliance. It dates from the day when Italy came to an agreement with these Powers over the partition of interests in the Mediterranean. And if the understanding had not existed before, it would have come about of itself, so soon as the entente cordiale was concluded between France and England. How could Italy defend her vast coast-line against the united English and French fleets if a conflict should arise? What could her German and Austro-Hungarian Allies do to protect her?

There is some right to regard with suspicion this eagerness to unite, for a so-called defensive object, Powers who are menaced by nobody. At Berlin they cannot forget that offer of 100,000 men made by the King of England to M. Delcassé.<sup>28</sup> We ourselves have to note the remarkable overtures made by Colonel Barnardiston to General Ducarne;<sup>29</sup> and who knows whether there may not have been other similar intrigues that have not come to our knowledge. It is no wonder, therefore, that the King of England's proceedings give rise to certain apprehensions here, apprehensions that are shared at Vienna. They have found utterance in an article in the *Freie Presse*, which were reproduced and commented on by the *Koelnische Zeitung* the day before yesterday, No. 402. This article in the *Koelnische Zeitung* has made a great stir among some of my colleagues. I did not send it to you, because I saw at the first glance that it only expressed the opinion of the Editor. Events proved me right. The *Koelnische Zeitung* has been disavowed in its own columns (No. 409 this morning) in an official telegram from Berlin. It prints the telegram, but adds its own strictures. The German Government cannot say anything different to what it says; but if one could see into its mind I should be very much surprised if, what the *Koelnische Zeitung* is able to say were not identical with what the Government is obliged *not* to say.<sup>30</sup>

From Baron Joostens' report an exaggerated importance at Madrid seems to be attached to the idea of a Franco-German compromise. As I wrote before, the overtures of the French semi-official Press have been well received by the German semi-official organs. The Emperor's reply to the speech made by M. Cambon, when he presented his credentials, was peculiarly cordial; but it is only on points of secondary importance that there can be any agreement, and that will be too fragile to outlive any

serious political upheaval. In connection with the discussion in the Chamber over General Bailloud, M. Clemenceau has told us what French feeling really is. Until 1870 is forgotten the relations between Berlin and Paris can at most be formal and very precarious.

I have the honour to remain, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE NORTHCLIFFE PRESS.

No. 30.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London,  
to M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, May 24, 1907.

SIR,

Anglo-German relations continue to be frigidly correct; but the antipathy to the German nation, which is felt here by all classes of the community, is as marked now as when I wrote you on February 8, 1907.

Some right-minded people, however, protest how unfortunate it is that such a state of ill-will should be allowed to persist; but, so far, the palliatives that they have tried, under the auspices of the Liberal Government, have remained ineffectual. In vain have they organised, and are still organising visits to Berlin by municipal councillors, members of Parliament, and representatives of the leading papers.

There is a certain section of the Press, known here as the "yellow press," which is very largely responsible for the antagonism between the two nations. What really can one expect from a journalist like Mr. Harmsworth (now Lord Northcliffe), who is the editor of the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Graphic*, *Daily Express*, *Evening News* and *Weekly Dispatch*, and who exclaimed in an interview with *Le Matin*, "Yes, we detest the Germans, and with all our hearts. They make themselves hated by the whole of Europe. I would not allow the least thing to be printed in my paper which might offend France; but I should be very sorry to publish anything whatever that might please Germany."

Yet in 1899 this same editor was attacking the French in precisely the same violent manner, and wanted to boycott the Paris Exhibition. "The French," he wrote,

“have succeeded in convincing John Bull that they are his inveterate enemies. England has long hesitated between France and Germany, but she has always respected the German character, whereas she has come to despise France. An *entente cordiale* between England and her nearest neighbour is not possible. We have done with France, she has neither courage nor political understanding.”

It is journalists such as this, the editors of cheap popularly written papers who, at their pleasure, poison the minds of a whole nation.

It is plain that official England is pursuing a policy that is covertly hostile, and tending to result in the isolation of Germany, and that King Edward has not been above putting his personal influence at the service of this cause. Still, there is an obvious risk in stirring up public passions, as is done by the irresponsible Press of which I am speaking.

I have the honour to remain, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 31.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister at Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *May 30, 1907.*

SIR,

A deputation of English journalists is at this moment in Berlin, on a return visit to that paid by the German pressmen a few months ago. No trouble has been spared to give them a most hearty reception. One of the North-German Lloyd boats went to Dover to fetch the Englishmen across, and landed them at Bremerhaven on May 27. They received a warm welcome, first from the authorities of the City of Bremen, and afterwards from those of Hamburg, and most friendly speeches were made on both sides.

The same thing took place at Berlin, where the English journalists arrived yesterday at one o'clock. The Duke of Trachenberg, President of the Reception Committee, was waiting for them at the station. After lunch the English visitors were driven about the town in motor-cars

to show them the public buildings. In the evening there was a banquet in the zoological gardens, at which were present many notable personages connected with the press, the Government, and the world of commerce. The toasts were numerous, and all inspired by the same idea: that to dispel certain prejudices detrimental to good relations between the two countries, it is desirable that mutual confidence and personal relations should be established between the journalists of England and Germany. The idea is a sound one: and one is bound to approve those with whom it first originated; but I have seen so many attempts at a *rapprochement* come to nothing, that I cannot but feel some scepticism as to any definite result. How often have not the most cordial phrases been interchanged, only to be consigned to oblivion within one short week, and succeeded by controversy no less bitter in tone than before.

It is all the more difficult to do away with the tension that exists in the relations between the two countries because it does not arise from any definite points in dispute.

If there existed between Germany and England the same sort of quarrel as that which existed between London and Paris at one time over the question of Egypt, then it might be put an end to by a formal settlement. But there is nothing similar in any part of the globe to mar the relations of Germany and England. The coldness between them is not the result of any concrete fact. It is a matter of sentiment.

England is jealous of the gigantic strides made by Germany in industry and commerce, and in her mercantile fleet. She is so used to being without a rival that any competition seems to her to be an act of trespass in her own domain.

England feigns fears in view of the growth of Germany's Navy. Their sincerity seems to me more than doubtful. She must know that, even in the very far future, it will be practically impossible for Germany to attack her. On the contrary, it is Germany who has every reason to be afraid. For centuries past England has set herself to destroy every foreign naval force as soon as it reached a certain standard of strength. First Holland, and then France met with this fate. Next came the turn of Denmark, whose vessels were destroyed without the ghost of an excuse by Admiral Nelson, who had entered the

harbour of Copenhagen as a friend. It was the feeling of apprehension in Germany which aroused popular support for the development of the Germany Navy, until it should at least be strong enough to play a defensive part. The majority of the nation would not hear of this development so long as any possibility seemed to remain of being able to rely on England's friendship, or, at the least, on her neutrality.

This mistrust is still further fostered by the personal zeal shown by the King of England in making ententes with the whole world, excepting Germany, and yet he has no grievance against her that can be stated. The Press makes it worse by representing each success won by England in the field of foreign politics as contributing to the isolation of Germany as its final object. And who will say that the Press is wrong in this respect? Far from provoking this tension in her relations with England, Germany is the sufferer by it. This is shown by the repeated attempts at a *rapprochement*, which invariably originate in Berlin. Possibly, one of the causes of their ill-success is the prodigality with which they occur. These noisy demonstrations of friendship are not really in accord with material facts, nor do they represent the feelings of the nations; and on each occasion they cause, both in England and Germany, a reaction, which would have been guarded against, if it had simply been desired to maintain decorous and normal relations.

At the banquet yesterday this mistake was not repeated. In the important political speeches made by Herr von Mühlberg, as representing the Chancellor, and by Sir Frank Lascelles, the English Ambassador, all dangerous exaggeration was avoided; and both speakers confined themselves to setting forth the situation as it actually is. I send you both speeches, although you will already, I suppose, have received them through the telegraphic agencies. Still, you will no doubt like to see the authentic text.

In substance, Herr von Mühlberg said that when he read the foreign newspapers, not excepting the English ones, he found almost every day in them some fable cleverly spread abroad and meekly received by numberless believers; and according to which Germany was menacing the peace of the world. It is the German Army, especially, on which the foreigner casts a suspicious eye, as a formidable military machine destined one day to

spread trouble throughout the universe. It was quite true that Germany had a gallant and powerful army, and one of which she was proud, but could anyone say that she had ever made any bad use of it since the Empire was first founded? The German military system was a hundred years old, and existed, therefore, long before the time of the Empire, at a period when there was certainly no idea of conquest or annexation. At that time Germany had sunk to the deepest abyss of misery,<sup>32</sup> and her sons sacrificed everything to secure the independence of their country and shake off the yoke of the foreigner. And through all subsequent vicissitudes the fundamental features of the German military system have never varied.

It was said, especially in England, that Germany cherished hidden designs as regards her fleet. A perusal of the Law of January 14, 1900, sufficed to show that this was impossible. This Law marked out the limits beyond which the Executive power is unable to go. A comparison with the effective strength of the English fleet would demonstrate to any impartial onlooker that Germany's only idea is to protect her coast and her maritime trade. Her aspirations went no further, and any great nation regardful of its honour must desire as much as this.<sup>33</sup>

It may perhaps be asked, said Herr von Mühlberg, whether Germany really needs to protect her coasts by such expensive methods. But glance at the history of the German people. It is full of terrible and unforgettable lessons. There is not a country in Europe that has suffered and bled more under the attacks of foreign and warlike races. They have come from all the regions of the earth, scattering death and devastation around them.

Sceptics might, perhaps, object that the German Army and Navy are dangerous instruments, that some day the temptation might arise to make use of them to obtain more room for the ever-increasing population. But Germany did not need fresh territory, although her population is increasing at the rate of from 800,000 to 900,000 souls every year, whilst emigration is dwindling. She needs hands everywhere, both for her agriculture and her manufactures.

Herr von Mühlberg did not mean to imply that the Germans were ascetics; they aspired to free and honourable competition in the world's commerce. It had been alleged that German policy was lacking in stability and

continuity. That was a mistake; their policy is everywhere the open door. Englishmen ought to understand that. In every country over which England has extended her sphere of influence, she had done her utmost to develop that country's natural resources and to raise the standard of civilisation. Lord Cromer had done so only just recently in Egypt. The German Emperor in his policy shared this view of the proper action and aims of a civilised State. This was the ground on which Germany and England might come together and join hands in a common task, without prejudice to their (other) friendships and alliances.

Similarly, the Press of the two countries, interpreting as it did the thoughts and feelings of the two nations, might collaborate with the official world to bring about a mutual understanding on terms of mutual respect, and to dispel mythical inventions and unwarrantable suspicions.

Sir Frank Lascelles in his reply said that he naturally desired earnestly to improve the relations between Germany and England. He expressed the pleasure he felt on hearing the views put forward by Herr von Mühlberg as to the end which both countries should have in view in order to establish mutual friendship without detriment to their already existing friendships with other Powers. Herr von Mühlberg alluded, as Count Metternich had done last year, to a certain sort of newspaper article which created an atmosphere of bitterness and suspicion, based upon misunderstandings, but more difficult, perhaps, to dispel than real difference of opinion. The state of things had notably improved, but it would be premature to say that all misunderstandings had been already obviated. Sir F. Lascelles confidently hoped that personal intercourse between the German and English Pressmen and the kind reception they had experienced, together with the assurances made by Herr von Mühlberg in the name of the Imperial Government, would contribute not only to remove prejudices, but also to establish friendly relations between the two nations, to the great advantage of both.

I should be only too glad to see the wishes expressed by Herr von Mühlberg and Sir F. Lascelles realised. I am absolutely convinced of their having been uttered with sincerity. The existence of strained relations between Germany and England may serve the purpose of

short-sighted and petty political schemers, but it is detrimental to the higher considerations of preserving the peace of Europe, guaranteed to us for the last 36 years by the preponderance of Germany. Moreover, such tension encourages the designs of politicians who are dissatisfied with the existing order of things.

Sir F. Lascelles must be better aware than anybody what an uphill task is that which he holds out to the two nations, for it is the task upon which he is himself engaged. I have been a witness for the last 12 years of the efforts he has made to accomplish it. And yet, possessing as he justly does the absolute confidence of the Emperor and the German Government, and eminently gifted with the qualities of a statesman, he has, nevertheless, not succeeded very well so far. His speech yesterday shows that he cherishes no illusions, but that he nevertheless intends to persevere bravely in the course he has mapped out for himself.<sup>34</sup>

I have the honour to remain, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE "TIMES" AND ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 32.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *June 8, 1907.*

SIR,

The Emperor has sent a telegram to Herr von Mühlberg, congratulating him warmly on his speech at the banquet given to the English journalists, of which I had the honour to give you some account in my report of May 30 last. This telegram has not been published, but it shows that the Under Secretary of State for the Imperial Department of Foreign Affairs has faithfully interpreted His Majesty's views.

The visit of the pressmen terminated as prosperously as it began. They were invited to witness the Spring Parade of the Potsdam Garrison on May 31. They came down in a special train and found seats reserved for them in front of the castle. They greeted the Emperor with

hearty applause when he passed in front of them. The Duke of Trachenberg acted as their guide to the New Palace and to Sans Souci, where they were shown round by a master of the ceremonies and entertained to lunch in the Orange House. The Emperor appeared while coffee was being served, and conversed very graciously with the principal guests. They then proceeded to the tomb of the Emperor and Empress Frederick, upon which they deposited wreaths.

The next day the pressmen set out for Dresden, where they received a no less excellent reception from the King, City Corporation, the Press and the inhabitants. The same thing was repeated at Munich, Frankfurt, Cologne and Rudesheim. On quitting this last-named town, they travelled to Kiel, where they took ship for Copenhagen, very much pleased, apparently, by the manner of their reception. The officially-inspired Press has repeatedly expressed the hope that the personal relations established between the English journalists and their German colleagues may lead to an improvement in the relations of the two countries. The representatives of the English Press must have carried away the impression that such is the very sincere desire both of the nation and of the Government.

Other occurrences of a similar sort are such as to bear out this conviction. An English Parliamentary committee has come to Germany to study the waterways; and has been very well received; and nothing has been omitted to facilitate their task. A visit from the Lord Mayor of London is announced for June 22, and the most cordial reception is being prepared for him.

What will be the lasting results of all these demonstrations? In all probability, nothing. The report which you were so good as to communicate to me in your despatch the day before yesterday, shows that my London colleague—who is better placed than I for forming an opinion—is even more sceptical than I am. As Count de Lalaing very truly says: The King of England is personally directing a policy, whose ultimate object is the isolation of Germany. His activities are in accordance with the feeling of the country which is misled by an unscrupulous Press, which cares for nothing except a big circulation and panders to popular passions with this sole aim in view. It is not only the cheap Press which stoops to this part.

The *Times* has for years been pursuing a campaign of calumny and misrepresentation. Its Berlin correspondent, who has every opportunity for knowing better, fosters the English hatred of the Germans by imputing to the Kaiser's Government ambitious designs of quite glaring absurdity and by accusing it of shady transactions of which no one ever dreamed. And yet the English public swallows it all without blinking, because these fictions suit its own prejudices. How could the tide of anti-German feeling be stayed by the tiny band of more honest and more clear-sighted writers? There can be no doubt that those English journalists who accepted Germany's hospitality belong mainly to the chosen few. It was preaching to the converted.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE ANGLO-FRANCO-SPANISH MEDITERRANEAN AGREEMENT.

No. 33.

MONSIEUR A. LEGHAIT, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
MONSIEUR DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *June 17, 1907.*

SIR,

The friendly relations and the entente that have existed for some two years past between France, England and Spain have recently been confirmed by more definite ties, which map out clearly the grouping of the Powers and the care which they are taking to provide by pacific declarations against possibilities of a different kind.

France and England have each simultaneously just concluded a precisely similar agreement with Spain. According to M. Pichon's assertions yesterday, this agreement is of a purely diplomatic nature, and contains no military engagements, nor any secret clauses. Its object is the maintenance of the *status quo* in those parts of the Mediterranean and Atlantic in which the contracting Powers are interested. The Powers mutually guarantee to each other their respective possessions, together with freedom of communication with those possessions. The text of this agreement has been communicated to the Governments of Germany, Russia,

Austro-Hungary, Italy, Japan, the United States, and Portugal.

In the newspaper article attached you will find, Sir, some very precise details as to the origin and scope of these agreements, and also as to the instructions which have been given to the French ambassadors, whose duty it is to expound them to the Governments to which they are respectively accredited.

There is nothing in the nature of a Triple Alliance, nor even of a threefold convention, to give this agreement a significance that might alarm certain Embassies. If, however, one reflects on the identical aim and simultaneity of the two agreements, one perceives that there must be a triple accord with a common objective.<sup>35</sup>

Thus in addition to the Franco-Japanese agreement, which is only a clever English manœuvre, France obtains additional guarantees for her overseas possessions by joining in with Great Britain, whose policy it is to secure the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and prevent any other Power from exerting any influence or acquiring any possessions in those parts.

It is observed that these agreements are of a very pacific nature, and one likes to think that they may even form a guarantee of peace, but one cannot help at the same time wondering what sort of dangers can exist to justify such great precautions. France is, for the moment, reaping the benefits of the *Entente cordiale* with England, and people here are glorifying M. Pichon's diplomatic triumphs. Yet people are to be met with who fear that all these efforts to ensure peace may end by provoking war. Indeed, all thoughtful minds fear it, and are doing their best to put Parliament and the public as a whole on their guard against becoming intoxicated with these diplomatic successes, and neglecting to take proper precautions against the dangers to which they are exposed; and they continue to impress upon public opinion that France would be the first to feel the burden and to suffer the consequences, should complications arise in Europe.

England is laying her plans with masterly skill; but in becoming England's associate, is France sufficiently ensured against the possible risk of some day falling a victim to her policy? The uncertainty which prevails on this subject suggests that there exists between France and the British Government a more comprehensive

agreement than the *entente cordiale*, but that this agreement will remain in a state of abeyance until the day when events may make it necessary to reveal its terms.<sup>76</sup>

Whether in order to forearm herself now against perils that are possibly imaginary, or to strengthen the hands of those who are directing her domestic policy, France is in fact incurring a debt of gratitude, which she may find very burdensome when the day comes for England to reveal her purpose, and to show in what way she intends to make use of all the influences that she is collecting around her.

I have the honour to remain, etc.,

(Signed) A. LEGHAIT.

## THE "ISOLATION" OF GERMANY.

No. 34.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
MONSIEUR DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, June 19, 1907.

SIR,

As a corollary to the agreement recently concluded between Spain and France, which provides for the maintenance of the *status quo* in all that concerns their territories in the Mediterranean basin and bordering on the Atlantic, Spain has just signed a similar convention with England, which aims at guaranteeing the possessions of both countries along the Mediterranean waters and the ocean. The text of this latter agreement has not yet been made public. Indeed, the bare fact that an Entente had been agreed upon between Madrid and London only became known through the indiscretion of a Paris daily paper.<sup>37</sup>

The English declare that their policy, pre-eminently pacific, is inspired by the motive of providing an additional guarantee for the security of the route to India and the Far East. They would have the Spanish ports at their disposal in case of need. Needless to say, the British Press declares that Germany would have no right to complain of the Anglo-Spanish entente, since it is in nowise aimed at Berlin. It is, however, difficult to imagine that Germany will not regard it as a further step

in England's policy, which is determined, by every sort of means, to isolate the German Empire.

I have the honour to be, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## THE "ISOLATION" OF GERMANY.

No. 35.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
MONSIEUR DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *June 22, 1907.*

SIR,

To judge by the first notices published by those daily papers which are in touch with the Imperial Chancellor's department, the German Government intends to preserve an absolutely passive attitude towards the two new international ententes of which we have just been informed.

The agreement between France and Japan solemnly reaffirms the two principles of the integrity of China and the open door. This is in accordance with the stipulations made, seven years ago, in an agreement between Germany and England, with which various other Powers associated themselves, and amongst others, France and Japan.

The settlement agreed upon between England, France and Spain is not yet published, and it was the intention of the contracting Powers not to make it public before August. An indiscretion, committed in Rome, allowed the papers to get hold of it prematurely. I have had an opportunity of ascertaining that their information is correct. The three Powers recognise the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and Atlantic, and will consult together on the steps to be taken should their possessions be threatened.

There is nothing in all that to affect Germany's interests. The Imperial Government has been kept in touch with the progress of the negotiations between France and Japan, through the Japanese and French Governments. Some days ago, the Ambassadors of Spain, France and England, each acting separately, communicated to the Imperial Foreign Office the Notes that were exchanged in ratification of the agreement concluded between their respective countries. Every formality,

therefore, has been fully satisfied, and there is nothing which could give ground for official complaint.

Nevertheless, the impression created at Berlin has been a very painful one, for the reasons which I took the liberty to set forth in my report of May 13 last.

International ententes are all the fashion. After the Franco-Russian alliance, we have had Italy's convention with France and England about the Mediterranean, the alliance between England and Japan, and the agreement under which Egypt and Morocco were bartered between England and France. England is negotiating with Russia about the delimitation of frontiers and spheres of influence in Asia. The explanation of all these ententes was either the desire to put an end to old disputes or to prevent new ones arising, or else to make the interested Governments secure from being interfered with in the realisation of their ambitions.

These two last agreements are not, like those I have just mentioned, the outcome of any political necessity. One might indeed regard them as being purely ornamental, unless they conceal some unavowed motive. Japan is quite strong enough to guarantee China's integrity by herself until the day comes when she is ready to violate it herself.<sup>38</sup> It can hardly be suggested that England has any need of Spain's assistance to defend her position in Egypt, Cyprus, Malta and Gibraltar. Who wants to attack it? And, what is more, who would have the practical means of doing so? France is no less secure in Algeria and Tunis. No danger could arise except from one of the signatory Powers themselves, should their existing friendship lapse; and, in such hypothesis, to-day's agreements would fall to pieces of themselves. If they do not contain any secret clauses, they seem to have been concluded solely for the pleasure of once more excluding Germany from the settlement of the world's affairs. These precautions against imaginary dangers are of a sort to arouse and foster among the nations the idea that Germany is the aggressive Power, against whose schemes other countries are forced to band themselves together.

There would be no great harm in these treaties were they merely superfluous; but they compromise the cause of peace whilst pretending to serve it, because they arouse in circles hostile to Germany an expectation that the moment is at hand when their designs can materialise.

The German Press is annoyed, but no semi-official statement has yet been issued.

The following incident will enable you to estimate, better than any official or semi-official statement would do, the feeling privately entertained by the Imperial Government. The Spanish Ambassador was the first to communicate to the Under-Secretary of State the Notes that had been exchanged between his country and France and England. After he had read them aloud, he exerted himself to show that the settlement agreed upon was in no way whatever aimed at Germany, and that its object was solely pacific and defensive. Herr von Mühlberg said, interrupting him, "Yes, I know; we are progressing towards an era of perpetual peace." This ironical remark is more eloquent than many long speeches. When, shortly afterwards, Herr von Mühlberg received the French Ambassador's communication, he made no comment.

He has not maintained the same reserve towards third parties. I saw him yesterday, and found his view tallies with mine. He added that it is the manner of its production which causes the agreement to make such a disagreeable impression. The substance of the Notes is of no great importance, and they would never have that effect had they been at once made public. Needless to say, the Under-Secretary of State does not take the incident tragically, seeing that it makes no change in a situation that was already recognised. He notes it, however, as a fresh symptom.

I must beg you to regard what Herr von Mühlberg said to me as strictly confidential.

I have the honour to remain, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 36.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
MONSIEUR DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, July 1, 1907.

SIR,

The German Press has been full—though without, however, laying any great stress on the matter—of the invitation to dinner which M. Etienne<sup>39</sup> received from

the Emperor at Kiel, and about the two long conversations which followed it. The account of those audiences, published in the *Paris Journal*, evidently misrepresents their spirit. The *Journal* attributes to the Emperor words which his Majesty certainly never uttered. The version given by Senator St. Germain, M. Etienne's friend in the *Vossische Zeitung*, sounds much more probable. According to his account, the Emperor said that he was ready to join with the other Powers in pressing the Moorish Government to carry out the reforms agreed upon at Algeciras, and that he has no objection to France policing the frontier between Algeria and Morocco.

But whatever may have been the topic of conversation, one thing is certain—that his Majesty received M. Etienne in the kindest possible manner and that M. Etienne was very agreeably impressed by his reception. But his Majesty always receives with very marked distinction every Frenchman who is presented to him.

From Kiel, M. Etienne went on to Berlin, where he had a very long conversation with the Chancellor. According to a little paragraph about it which appeared in the papers, and is obviously inspired, Prince Bülow cannot fail to have been charmed by the personality of the eminent statesman who was visiting him, and the friendly and flattering reception which M. Etienne received at Berlin must have been of a piece with that accorded by the Emperor to his French guests at Kiel.

It is plain that M. Cambon, the new French Ambassador at Berlin, desires to improve the relations between his country and Germany, and there is reason to believe that he has put forward some concrete proposals, or that he intends to do so as soon as he finds a favourable opportunity.

As a matter of fact, M. Cambon, without taking me into his confidence in any special way, lately told me that he was sorry to find the German Government always so suspicious of France. A short time before, Herr von Mühlberg had told me that M. Cambon had expressed himself in a similar sense to him, and that he, for his part, asked nothing better than to trust France, if only she would show her sincerity by actions.

There would have been no point in M. Cambon's expression of regret unless, as French Ambassador, he had made, or tried to make, overtures on some definite point.

So M. Etienne's journey to Kiel, and the manner of his reception there, are worth noting as symptoms, but undue importance must not be attached to them. The most that can be achieved between Berlin and Paris are relations of formal civility. For any genuine and durable *rapprochement*, it would be necessary to lay aside all thought of *la revanche*, and there is not a single Frenchman, even amongst the wisest and those that best love peace, who in the depths of his heart does not cherish the hope of revenge.

I have the honour to be, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE FRENCH IN MOROCCO.

No. 37.

MONSIEUR E. DE CARTIER, Belgian *Chargé d'Affaires* in London, to M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, August 10, 1907.

SIR,

The English public is following the developments of the Morocco crisis with interest. The newspapers are publishing lengthy columns of reports, but on the whole show a reasonable sobriety in comment and in reflections arising from the lamentable occurrences now taking place at Casablanca<sup>40</sup> and elsewhere. If public opinion is wholly on the side of France in this affair, it is perhaps not so much because it is pleased to see the first effects of the "peaceful penetration" as it used to be preached by M. Delcassé, as because they fancy—rightly or wrongly—that the military operations now going on in the ports of Morocco are vexatious to Germany.

After extolling the bravery of the French and the courage of the Spaniards, the big English dailies persist in calling attention to certain articles which have appeared in the Viennese Press, and which they imagine to reflect the private aspirations of the Friederickstrasse (*sic!*), and they elaborately contrast their purport with the declarations, couched in less oracular language, promulgated in the principal German papers.

Without going so far as avowedly to hope that the bombardment of Casablanca may lead to the same results

in Morocco as the bombardment of Alexandria, in 1882, led to in Egypt, the English Press urges the necessity of ensuring at all costs the re-establishment of order and of security of person and property. The *Standard* alone, taking occasion to reflect that keen instinct for intervention ever latent in the heads of Britishers, expresses astonishment at the apathy shown by the Government in the face of these serious current events. The *Standard* regrets to see that only France, in conjunction with Spain, is undertaking the work of policing those districts, and deplores that England should be content to play a subordinate rôle.

The *Daily News*, which never rests from its anti-Congo campaign except to erect altars to Russian nihilists or Italian anarchists, is indignant—though surely somewhat prematurely—at the barbarity of the repression at Mazagan.

The *Tribune*, which is the organ of Nonconformist divines and philanthropic Radicals, sadly points to the coincidence that the French and Spanish squadrons were bombarding Casablanca at the very moment when the Hague Conference was debating the adoption of a resolution forbidding the bombardment of open ports.

The *Westminster Gazette*, the paper which represents the views of the moderate section of the party in power, after alluding to the conversations between M. Cambon and Prince Bülow, hopes that France will succeed, to the great satisfaction of Europe and at the cost of half a dozen sailors' lives, in at last securing more elbow room in Morocco, so that she may be able to fulfil the obligations imposed on her by the treaties.

The morning papers publish, without comment, some reports about the siege of the British consulate at Casablanca, and note the desire expressed by the British Consul at Mazagan to see the persons and property of Englishmen protected by a gunboat.

Anxiety as to the fate of Kaid McLean has for the time being been allayed by the information that he is no longer Raisuli's prisoner but under the protection of the Hkmass.

I shall take care to keep you informed of any developments in the present events which might tend to affect the interests of England, and beg, etc.

(Signed) E. DE CARTIER.

## THE "TIMES" "ATTACK ON GERMANY.

No. 38.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
MONSIEUR DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *October 11, 1907.*

SIR,

I have the honour to call your attention to the leading article (attached) which appeared in yesterday's *Times*, on the subject of the forthcoming visit from the Emperor of Germany. It has attracted much comment. This paper seizes the opportunity to level a whole series of attacks against Prince Bülow. It accuses him of feigning an honest zeal for a *rapprochement* with England whilst secretly encouraging the reptile Press in its attacks. It hints that if he appears, on second thoughts, to be better disposed towards England, it is only because the Chancellor's eyes have been opened to the strength of England's position by the entente cordiale between London and Paris, and by the Anglo-Russian agreement. Besides, the German Fleet is not ready.

"Let us rather hope," adds the *Times* perfidiously, "that as Sir Edward Grey has said, any improvement in the relations between Germany and England depends on good relations between Germany and France."

The Liberal Press censures this language, and calls it insolent and tactless. The *Tribune* and *Westminster Gazette*, in particular, criticise it severely, and maintain that the Emperor will have a good reception. As for the Socialists, they have stated that they will take care to show the Kaiser, when he goes through the streets of London, what the English workman thinks of his Imperial Majesty; but these threats do not appear to be taken seriously, and it is trusted that the precautionary measures adopted will be sufficient to obviate any incident.

The Emperor and Empress are expected in England about the 11th of next month, accompanied probably by Prince Bülow. They will be lodged at Windsor. On the 13th, their Majesties will lunch with the Lord Mayor in the city, thence to Windsor, where they will make a stay of about a week altogether.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

[This is the last despatch in 1907.]

## EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES TO TEXT.

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<sup>1</sup> French Foreign Minister.

<sup>2</sup> Succeeded Rouvier.

<sup>3</sup> French diplomacy was, throughout, thoroughly antagonistic to the British pressure upon King Leopold II. The French Congo was gravely compromised by the scandals ensuing from the same system as that adopted by Leopold II. There had been appalling revelations from that French dependency in the Autumn of 1906, which had led to fierce denunciations in the French Chamber. The more British public opinion pressed for reform in the Congo State the more French diplomacy feared that the question might be brought before an international conference, from which the proceedings in the adjoining French Congo could hardly have been excluded. (See "Great Britain and the Congo," chap. XVII. Smith Elder and Co., London).

<sup>4</sup> The figures of the first ballot were Centrum, 89; Conservative, 49; Social Democrats, 29; National Liberals, 20; other parties, including Poles, 58.

<sup>5</sup> See Dispatch No. 23.

<sup>6</sup> The triumph of the Right at the polls was undoubtedly due in the main to the provocative policy of Anglo-French diplomacy in 1905-06. "Deep called to deep," as ever. The jingoes in England and France gave more power to the jingoes in Germany. The Emperor's popularity had grown under the violent personal diatribes of the *Times*, which, until about 1917, was universally regarded, not (usually) without reason, as the mouthpiece of the British Foreign Office.

<sup>7</sup> See Note 5.

<sup>8</sup> German Ambassador.

<sup>9</sup> The Socialists had fiercely attacked the Budget on February 7, and in the course of the debate the Franco-Russian alliance came in for vigorous handling. M. Rouanet spoke of the recent murder of the Russian Grand Duke Sergius as an "execution," and described Russia as a country whose finances were "rotten." M. Pichon (Foreign Minister) protested against these remarks. He was interrupted by shouts from the Socialist benches: "We side with the Russian proletariat against their assassin, the Tsar." M. Pichon went on to defend the French loans to Russia and to reprobate any statements in the Chamber calculated "to compromise the maintenance of an Alliance to which we are all more than ever attached."

<sup>10</sup> The Anglo-Russian negotiations over Persia were actively proceeding at this time and culminated in August. This was the

first overt proof of Sir E. Grey's subservient policy towards the Russian Tsardom which culminated in the great war. For a history of the outrageous treatment of Persia see "The Strangling of Persia": Shuster (Fisher Unwin, London). Blunt notes in his diary (September 6th, 1907): "There is very little doubt that the partition of the whole of Asia is in the programme of our Foreign Office, and would already be a *fait accompli* but for Kaiser Wilhelm." ("My Diaries": Wilfred Scawen Blunt. Martin Secker, London, 1920).

<sup>11</sup> Lord Morley's correspondence with the Viceroy of India is of much interest in this transaction. ("Recollections": Macmillan.)

<sup>12</sup> March 22, 1907. France never evacuated Udja.

<sup>13</sup> The Anglo-Russian agreement was signed on August 31. In the summer of that year Admiral Skrydloff came to Paris to make arrangements for the reconstruction of the Russian fleet after the disastrous war with Japan. From that date onwards the French and British (Vickers and John Brown) did most of the Russian naval building, etc.

<sup>14</sup> The efforts of Anglo-French diplomacy to detach Italy from the Triple Alliance were, of course, incessant, but that was the usual game of the "Balance of Power." Italy began to drift out of the Triple Alliance in 1897, although actually remaining a member of it. In 1902 her Government concluded a secret arrangement with France, securing a free hand in Tripoli in exchange for a free hand for France in Morocco. In 1884, two years after Italy's first adherence to the Teutonic combination, Armstrong Whitworth's, the great British armament manufacturers, created the "Armstrong-Pozzuoli, Ltd., of Naples; Mr. Rendel resigned his position as Additional Sea Lord of the Admiralty to act as manager for the firm. In 1903 Armstrong-Whitworth acquired an interest in the rival firm of Italian armament manufacturers, Ansaldo and Co., of Genoa, which became, in 1911, "*La Societa anonima Italiana Geo. Ansaldo, Armstrong ed Co.*" In 1905 Vickers erected, in combination with an Italian metallurgical syndicate, gun works at Spezia, "to complete in Italy the means of satisfying, in conjunction with the Armstrong works at Pozzuoli, the requirements of the Government . . . in all that related to gun and armament material." The chairman of the company formed for this purpose was Mr. Albert Vickers. The same British armament firm became interested, in 1906, in an Italian firm of submarine builders at Maggiano. (See "How Europe Armed for War." Newbold: Blackfriars Press).

<sup>15</sup> By the new "grouping" the writer evidently means the increasing closeness of the links between Britain and the Franco-Russian Alliance, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and the questionable position of Italy in the Triple Alliance. To the Belgian diplomatic observer in the various capitals of Europe the "Balance of Power" appeared at this time to present itself thus:

(A) Russia		(B) Germany
France	<i>versus</i>	Austria
The British Empire		Italy—doubtful
Japan		

The potential strength of A Group as regards population and resources was, of course, overwhelmingly greater than the B

Group. To these neutral observers, therefore, the "balance" had been tilted against Germany to an extent which was calculated to breed in Germany the fear and suspicions whence wars arise.

<sup>16</sup> Colonel Goepp, of the 26th Infantry Regiment, in the course of a speech at a farewell dinner given to him on his retirement, said: "At the close of my career, at the time of leaving my regiment, my poignant grief is . . . that the war of revenge which we are expecting every day has not taken place. Two years ago I thought that it would come. Alas! my dreams did not materialise. But come it must . . ." General Bailloud, commanding at Nancy, who was present, also spoke. He said: "You remarked that we were within an ace of war in 1905. . . . This war will take place. Let us hope that the 26th . . . will contribute to return to us the lost provinces." A few days later General Bailloud wrote publicly of Colonel Goepp: "After the war (of 1870) he devoted his whole time . . . gave his whole heart to form the organisation (*les hommes et les cadres*) which, when the moment arrived, would be in a position courageously to undertake the struggle which will restore to France her lost provinces." As in the case of Mr. Austin Lee (see Part I.) a diplomatically corrected version of the speech was subsequently issued. *Le Temps* fiercely assailed the French War Office, then in charge of General Picquard, for the "extreme severity" it had shown in transferring General Bailloud from Nancy to Montpellier. (See *Le Temps*, March 26). Nancy is quite close to the German frontier.

<sup>17</sup> For an impartial examination of Germany's attitude at the Second Hague Conference see Mr. Lowes Dickinson's "The European Anarchy" (George Allen and Unwin, London). A detailed account of the proceedings is given in Mr. Pearce Higgins's "The Hague Peace Conferences" (Cambridge University Press). A statement by Lord Roberts made at a later date in his "Message to the Nation" is, perhaps, worth recalling: : " . . . Hence, gentlemen, the mistrust with which I have always viewed the proposals of British Ministers for a limitation of armaments. Emanating from Great Britain, such proposals must always, I imagine, impress the foreign observer as either too early or too late in English history. For how was this Empire of Britain founded? War founded this Empire—war and conquest. When we, therefore, masters by war of one-third of the habitable globe, when *we* propose to Germany to disarm, to curtail her navy or diminish her army, Germany naturally refuses. . . ."

<sup>18</sup> The reader may be referred to Crispi's "Memoirs" (Hodder and Stoughton); Mr. L. Woolf's "Empire and Commerce in Africa" (George Allen and Unwin); E. D. Morel's "The Black Man's Burden" (National Labour Press), etc.

<sup>19</sup> The Italian Foreign Minister.

<sup>20</sup> The international significance of the Algeiras Act was, of course, that while recognising to France a limited privileged position, it placed Morocco's future once more upon an international basis, upon which it had rested since 1880, but which the Anglo-French agreement of 1904 had sought to upset. The passage summarises very fairly this exchange of semi-official communications between the two Governments. (See *Le Temps* of April 5

and the *Koelnische Zeitung* of April 6). But this inspired journalistic fencing was largely make-believe. The point at issue at this stage was whether the French and British Governments would or would not regard the pledges taken by them under the Algeciras Act as incompatible with the secret arrangements for the partition of Morocco and the establishment therein of a Franco-Spanish (really a French) economic monopoly over Morocco's natural resources and external trade and, therefore, modify that policy. Sir Edward Grey was in a position at this time to have given to the Morocco controversy a peaceful turn. (See Morel's "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy"). It became clear in due course that he was determined to maintain all the implications of the secret agreements, to assist France to drive a coach and four through the Algeciras Act, and to back France in that design with the full strength of the British Empire. In perusing these dispatches and these notes the reader should constantly bear in mind that the situation was governed throughout by the secret Anglo-French military and naval "conversations" first authorised in January, 1906, by Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Asquith and Lord Haldane, behind the backs of their Cabinet colleagues.

<sup>21</sup> See Part II.

<sup>22</sup> This is a reference to the Anglo-Belgian military "conversations." See Note 7, Part II.

<sup>23</sup> See Note 22.

<sup>24</sup> This meeting was certainly not unconcerned with the attitude of Spain in the Morocco controversy. Spain had shown much irritation as to the French occupation of Udja.

<sup>25</sup> The Spanish Government regarded it as the first step in a military occupation of Morocco by France, without consulting Spain, as provided by the terms of the Secret Convention.

<sup>26</sup> Belgian Minister at Madrid.

<sup>27</sup> The secret Franco-Spanish Convention of October, 1904, was not known to the Belgian diplomatist. Spain was, of course, "up to the neck" in the Morocco deal, a very useful broker.

<sup>28</sup> See Part II., Note 3.

<sup>29</sup> See Part II., Note 7.

<sup>30</sup> The *Neue Freie Presse* (April 15) reputed to express the views of the Austrian Foreign Office, was disturbed over the meeting of King Edward VII. with the King of Italy at Gaeta, Italy's attitude towards her partners being increasingly questionable. The article enumerated King Edward's recent series of interviews—the Paris visit, the visit to the King of Spain at Carthagena, now the meeting at Gaeta, and went on to say:

"The King of England has not a reputation for caring about parades and shows . . . for their own sake. He is reckoned a clever man of business, who has succeeded in acquiring a determining influence upon the conduct of foreign policy, despite all the obstacles presented by the British Constitution. If the King of England has a meeting with the King of Italy, without circumstances affording any quite external and obvious explanation of it, then it must be a matter of serious politics, decisive for the position of their two countries. . . . The accident of his travelling to Italy from

Spain by sea takes away from the meeting nothing of its deliberate and intentional character. . . . Who can fail to receive the impression that a diplomatic duel is being fought out between England and Germany under the eyes of the world? The King of England, however, is in serious earnest over the duel and is no longer afraid of appearing to throw the whole influence of his personality into the scales whenever it is a question of thwarting the aims of German policy. This meeting at Gaeta is another fact connected with the burning jealousy between England and Germany. Here again an attempt is being made still further to loosen the tie between Italy and Germany. Already people are anxiously asking themselves everywhere: What is the meaning of this continual political labour, carried on with open recklessness, whose object is to *put a close ring round Germany* (Deutschland ganzlich einzukreisen). What is the meaning of these eternal provocations, for which there is no obvious excuse whatever, since nobody doubts *the peaceful aims of German policy*. The disarmament clause, too, which it is impossible for Germany to agree to as things are now, this, too, is pointed at Germany. What insolent irony and what provocative scorn lies here, that the very State which is proposing a clause for disarmament is feverishly active in the diplomatic field piling up alliances, friendships and meetings; and so unavoidably suggesting to the German people the idea that some grave danger is at hand which they can only ward off by the utmost exertion of their strength. After Carthage and Gaeta the prospects of an understanding at the Hague are even less and the fears for peace still greater." (The *Koelnische Zeitung* commented on the above quotation from the Viennese paper): "These remarks . . . are fresh proof that the many manifestations that centre round King Edward (all of them bearing for the benefit of the outer world the motive of the preservation of the world's peace) are not adapted to dispel the alarm the Powers feel at such preparations for peace as these, unless, indeed, they happen to be invited to take part in them. When two States such as Austria-Hungary and Germany have for more than a generation given practical proof of their love of peace by avoiding even the most favourable occasion for going to war, it is understandable that the sort of 'Entente Cordiale' for the alleged safeguarding of peace, from which they are excluded, leads them to suspect that which is really at issue is rather such a rearrangement of the Balance of Power in Europe as shall make the scale kick the beam on their side. This can only have for a result that these Powers will strengthen their armaments in order to be forearmed should the English *pan-universal-entente* (Allerwelts Entente) chance not to hinge on the mere love of peace. . . . Still, Germany is, thanks to her own strength, in a position to face every eventuality calmly . . ."

The official *démenti* of the above article (dated Berlin, April 17) was published in the *Koelnische Zeitung* on April 18, and runs:

"The remarks in the *Koelnische Zeitung* . . . are the subject here of much discussion, and even interpreted by some papers as being a cold water douche directed on England by the German Government. This view is erroneous, for the German Government does not consider itself at the moment as having

any cause to turn the hose on London. In influential circles the meeting of the Kings of England and Italy at Gaeta is not regarded as being in any way of a nature to endanger the quiet of Germany nor the peace of the world. In these circles it is not thought in any way strange that the King of England's tour in the Mediterranean should have led to a meeting with the King of Italy; nor even is it regarded as surprising that the Premier, Tittoni, should have accompanied the King of Italy to Gaeta. Tittoni's visits to Rapallo, and now to Gaeta have nothing to do with one another and it is an uncalled for assumption when foreign papers state that his visit to Gaeta is in some sort a counterpoise to the visit to Rapallo . . . the movements of the two Monarchs were anticipated a good time ago. . . . The announcement at first attracted no particular comment. Nor would it probably have done so now had it not been for the previous meeting between the Kings of England and Spain at Carthage, which led to comments in the French and English Press, which certainly made it appear as though the meeting at Carthage had resulted in agreements directed against the Triple Alliance. For instance, we have here a telegram from London, according to which the *Daily Express* points out that "on strategical grounds alone it is to England's interest to give Spain practical assistance in building up her once powerful navy again . . . already the deliberate transference of the English naval centre, i.e., to the North Sea, has brought about a considerable diminution of the English Mediterranean fleet, as well as of the Atlantic squadron, that had its base at Gibraltar. Just as the strengthening of the Japanese navy under the aegis of the English Alliance had resulted in the withdrawal of the English squadron in the Far East, so the reconstruction of the sea power of Spain and its alliance with England's, afforded the possibility for England to concentrate her sea power at the spot where in all probability it would one day be most needed." When such remarks find a place in the English Press it is not surprising now, after Gaeta, the German Press finds cause for suspicion in this quarter, too. . . . As we said before, in influential political circles it is not the view that any such significance is to be attributed to the meeting at Gaeta.

To this "inspired" telegram the *Koelnische Zeitung* added a footnote as follows:

"We could wish that the view expressed in the previous paragraphs may be proved correct. But we do hope, and, what is more, are convinced, that until this view is confirmed beyond all doubt, our influential circles will act on the lines indicated by us in No. 402, 'in order,' as we said there, 'to be forearmed, in case the English pan-universal-entente should not hinge on the mere love of peace.'"

<sup>31</sup> The Belgian diplomatist is not quite accurately informed as to the ramifications of Lord Northcliffe's journalistic activities.

<sup>32</sup> As the result of the Napoleonic Wars.

<sup>33</sup> See Sir John Fisher's "Memoirs" as regards the overwhelming superiority of the British Fleet at this period and the permanence, in his view, of that superiority. See, too, his quota-

tion from Sir Charles Dilke's article in the *United Service Magazine*, viz.: "Sir George Clarke (the Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence) points out that the navy is now (in October, 1907) stronger than at any previous time in its history."

<sup>34</sup> There are two very interesting entries in Mr. Wilfred Scawen Blunt's "Diaries" (Part II. Martin Secker, London, 1920) on Sir Frank Lascelles' Ambassadorship in Berlin. The first is dated July 26, 1902: "Lunched with Frank Lascelles at the Travellers' Club, and we talked of old days and of present days, too. His success as Ambassador at Berlin, where he has captured the friendship of the Emperor William, is the greatest diplomatic achievement of our day, which he attributes modestly to his talent for making small jokes of the kind which royal personages like." The second is dated June 27th, 1908. It reads: "He (Beauclerk) arrived from Wakehurst, where Frank Lascelles is staying, and brought me messages from him. Lascelles is out of favour now with the King, as being too German in his sentiments. He wanted to have the Paris Embassy, but the King refused on the ground that he was not married, so he is to retire. They hold him responsible for Kaiser Wilhelm's unfriendly attitude. Wilhelm told him recently that he was sick of England and everything to do with it." A further reference is not without interest. It is dated February, 1911: "Lascelles told a story about Kaiser Wilhelm's infatuation for Lord Lonsdale, whom he regarded as the most reliable of advisers about English things. Lonsdale had told the Kaiser once that he, Lonsdale, was in King Edward's black books on account of his being unwilling to give up the Kaiser's friendship. 'I told the King, however,' said Lonsdale, 'that this I would not do. I was ready to lay down my life for the Crown, as my ancestors had done, but not to betray my friends.' This is considered a good joke."

<sup>35</sup> The information given by the Belgian diplomatist is a summary of the official intelligence published in *Le Temps* that evening (June 17) to the effect that M. Pichon, French Foreign Minister, and Senhor de Leon Castillo, Spanish Ambassador, had signed an agreement which had been communicated the previous day to the Great Powers, *together with an analogous agreement between Spain and Britain*. *Le Temps* accompanied this official intimation by the following remarks:

"Spain and France have possessions in the Mediterranean and in the Atlantic. . . . The two Powers are obviously interested that the *status quo* in those regions should not be modified without their consent. They are still more interested that in the event of complications their communications with their respective possessions should be safe. . . . Franco-Spanish friendship, completed by Anglo-Spanish friendship, appears henceforth as a diplomatic combination which must be reckoned with. . . . We have, in short, acted with Spain as we have acted with Japan. That, in M. Pichon's words, is a pacific policy. Moreover, we do not forget that only the strong can ensure peace, and from that point of view we rejoice to group around us a series of friendships which . . . increase our strength."

In the same issue appeared an article by M. Georges Villiers, the well-known diplomatic writer on *Le Temps'* staff, in which

he stated that the agreement was purely diplomatic and contained no military convention or secret clauses.

36 An accurate and prophetic utterance!

37 See Note 35.

38 A cynical comment only too well justified by subsequent events.

39 The head of the French Colonial Party, a powerful and not over scrupulous politician, the recognised mouthpiece of the Chauvinistic colonial school.

40 The bombardment of Casablanca was a shameful outrage, leading to the slaughter of a great number of Moors. (See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy").

## PART IV.

[1908.]

M. Delcassé's reappearance—Jaurès urges France to abandon the Moroccan adventure—The German Naval Bill—French bombard Casablanca (Morocco)—Mulai Hafid (the new Sultan of Morocco) appeals for German protection against France—The Anglo-Russian conversations over Macedonia—Anglo-German relations and King Edward's activities—Meeting of King Edward and the Tsar at Reval—The nascent Triple Entente—German irritation—Sir Frank Lascelles' retirement—Austrian annexation of Bosnia.

## PART IV.

### Chronology of Principal Events in 1908.

[This year was a fateful year in the annals of Europe. It was notable for (a) the development of the Anglo-Russian understanding over Persia into a general Entente which involved Britain in support of Russian policy in the Balkans; (b) the revival of Russian Imperial policy in the Balkans, momentarily interrupted by the war with Japan, and which Tsarist Russia, re-habilitated in the world by Franco-British diplomatic support and triumphant over the Revolution through the help of Franco-British finance, once again resumed; (c) a simultaneous forward move by Austria in the Balkans culminating, after the Turkish Revolution, in the conversion of her 30 years military occupation and civil administration of Bosnia into a formal annexation, without consulting the signatory powers of the Berlin Treaty; (d) the Turkish Revolution; (e) the beginning of the naval "scare" agitation in England, which so exacerbated Anglo-German relations (f) increasing friction between France and Germany over Morocco.]

German Government introduces its Navy Bill Amendment Act .....*January.*

Moors depose Sultan Abdulziz: Mulai-Hafid proclaimed Sultan .....*January.*

M. Delcassé makes his first reappearance in the Chamber since the events of 1905, and delivers a fierce attack upon Germany and defence of his Morocco policy .....*January.*

Agitation in England over German shipbuilding...*All the Year.*

Anglo-Russian negotiations over Macedonian reforms..*January.*

Austria applies to the Sultan of Turkey for a railway concession through the Sandjak of Novi-Bazaar .....*January.*

The Kaiser writes to Lord Tweedmouth protesting against statements that Germany desires to challenge British sea-power .....*February.*

Lord Fisher, First Sea Lord, has a "long secret conversation" with King Edward VII., in which he suggests that Germany should be attacked without a declaration of war. In a letter to the King he says that: "that we have eventually to fight Germany is just as sure as anything can be, solely because she can't expand commercially without it" .....*March.*

Mr. Balfour makes the first of his series of "scare-speeches" over the German Navy in the House .....*March.*

Retirement and death of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman .....*April*

- Mr. Asquith becomes Premier ..... *April.*
- Italy threatens Turkey and mobilises her fleet ..... *April.*
- President Fallières comes to London ..... *May.*
- The Emperor of Austria celebrates his jubilee ..... *May.*
- Envoys from Mulai-Hafid arrive at Berlin and beg for German help against French encroachments and military operations against Moorish cities ..... *May.*
- The Shah of Persia with Russian support destroys the Constitution ..... *June.*
- Sir Frank Lascelles, British Ambassador to Germany, falls into disfavour with the British Court and retires ..... *June.*
- King Edward meets the Tsar at Reval ..... *June.*
- Isvolsky (Russian Foreign Minister) proposes to Aerenthal (Austrian Foreign Minister) that the two Governments should render one another mutual diplomatic assistance on the basis of (a) Austria's annexation of Bosnia (b) the abrogation of existing treaties which prohibit Russian warships from passing through the Dardanelles ..... *June.*
- Turkish Revolution : Sultan revives the Constitution of 1877...  
..... *July.*
- President Fallières visits the Tsar ..... *July.*
- Naval "panic" inspired by armament firms, and rigged for party political purposes ..... *August.*
- King Edward meets the Kaiser at Cronberg ..... *August 11.*
- King Edward meets the Emperor of Austria at Ischl .....  
..... *August 12.*
- Sir Charles Hardinge, permanent under Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, confers with Aerenthal at Ischl ..... *August 12.*
- Conference between King Edward, M. Clemenceau (French Premier) and Isvolsky, at Carlsbad. .... *August-September.*
- Isvolsky and Aerenthal sign an agreement at Buchlau confirming the June proposals. .... *September 15.*
- Bulgaria proclaims her independence ..... *October.*
- Crete declares for union with Greece .. ..... *October.*
- Austria proclaims the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and abandons the Sandjak of Novi-Bazaar ..... *October.*
- Serbia threatens war ..... *October.*
- Isvolsky (Russian Foreign Minister) visits Paris, London and Berlin, makes violent threats against Austria to Serbian diplomats in Paris and London : bids Serbian diplomatists hold their hand, as Russia is not yet ready for war : assures them that Serbia will ultimately secure Bosnia ..... *October.*
- Serbian Minister, Milovanovich, sees Sir E. Grey and Sir Charles Hardinge ..... *October.*
- Joint Anglo-Franco-Russian note to the Powers proposing an International Conference ..... *October.*
- Fierce attacks upon Austria by the *Times* ..... *October.*

Interview with Kaiser in the *Daily Telegraph*, in which he declares that the French and Russian Governments proposed to him joint intervention in favour of the Boers during the Boer War, and that he declined ... *November.*

Russia places orders for battleships with British armament firms ..... *November.*

Paschitsch (Serbian Minister) received in audience by the Tsar, who declares that the Bosnian question "will be decided by war alone," and bids Serbia arm and bide her time... *November.*

DESPATCHES FROM THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN  
BERLIN, AND FROM THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN  
PARIS.

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DELCASSÉ'S REAPPEARANCE.

No. 39.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *January 27, 1908.*

SIR,

I have only this morning seen for the first time the speech made by M. Delcassé in the French Chamber. I did not want to write to you about it so long as I knew nothing of it beyond the telegraphic summaries, which might not have given a very correct impression of it. The speech has impressed me disagreeably, not because M. Delcassé, after three years' silence, has sung the praises of his own line of policy (that was to be expected), but because of the applause with which he has been lauded and the reception he has received from the Press, especially the London Press. The speech bristles with allusions of a kind irritating to Germany. In one place he says that the Imperial Government, having no excuse for intervening in the affairs of Morocco, must have had some reasons of its own. The fact was that Europe was escaping from a sort of hegemony, and that in a free Europe France stood out a rallying centre for all those nations who cared for the independence of Europe and wished to consolidate it.

When has M. Delcassé found Germany attempting to impose her supremacy upon the other nations of Europe? We are her nearest neighbours, and in 20 years I have never perceived the least desire on the part of the Imperial Government to presume upon its strength and our weakness. I only wish that all the other Great Powers had shown the same consideration towards us.

M. Delcassé says that Germany never intended to go to war over Morocco.<sup>1</sup> This is quite true. Only instead of attributing this moderation to the Emperor's love of peace, he explains it by the fact that France had on her side the majority of the Great Powers, the opinion of the world, powerful friends, a trustworthy alliance and, above all, confidence in herself.

In other words, M. Delcassé plumes himself on having preserved the world's peace, thanks to the campaign for the isolation of Germany that he carried on in concert with the King of England.

M. Delcassé says that a foreign policy (i.e., his own) which has twice preserved peace for Europe must not be misrepresented.

Under what circumstances? When has the tranquility of Europe been menaced except by French dreams of revenge?

Yesterday the *Kölnische Zeitung* (No. 90) published a Berlin telegram which was evidently inspired. I wish to call your attention to that passage which says that they leave the French Government and the French people to judge for themselves whether this is a suitable moment for reviving old quarrels. The inspired correspondent would have preferred not to touch on them at a time when the Morocco question is still the focus of actual politics and may again be the subject of much discussion between France and Germany—discussions that will not be rendered easier by the fact that so eminent a politician as M. Delcassé should set vibrating the chords of an unmistakable jingoism.

The inspired telegram is couched in the calmest possible language. All the more significant is it, therefore, that M. Delcassé should blame the French Government for not having made full use of the Protocols drawn up at Algeirias, and asks: "Who can understand France's feebleness, in view of the position that she has reconquered, and when her future as a Great Power is at stake?"

M. Delcassé's speech is nothing else than an exhortation to return to his own policy, and that he himself should be placed again at the head of it, although, in point of fact, any change effected by his successor in that policy has been merely a slight modification of its form.

The deputies by whom he was applauded are the very

same as those who allowed him to be overthrown three years ago because they thought him over venturesome. Do they imagine that there is any change in Germany? Do they think that Russia is sufficiently recovered to come to their assistance with any effect? Are they speculating on the weakness of the Government's majority in the Reichstag, on the bad financial condition of Prussia and the German Empire, on the unrest created by the financial crisis and the high prices of food, and on the criticism of Prussia, manifested in the Press and sometimes in the Diets of the Southern States, Bavaria especially?

If this be so, they allow themselves to be most dangerously deluded. I was in Bavaria in 1870. The hatred of Prussia was much greater then than now, for they were still suffering under the defeat of 1866. But all was forgotten directly they were called on to face the common enemy. It would be the same again, and with still more reason. The sense of individuality in each State is still very strongly alive, and will remain so; but there is not a single German who would willingly return to the isolation and powerlessness of past days.

In conclusion I must further beg you to remark that the praises showered on M. Delcassé by the English papers indicate what we are to think about the recent *rapprochement* between Germany and England.<sup>2</sup>

The policy which is directed by King Edward VII. under the pretext of guaranteeing Europe against the German peril has created an all too real French danger, which primarily threatens us.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## DELCASSÉ'S REAPPEARANCE.

No. 40.

M. A. LEGHAIT, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, January 27-30, 1908.

Sir,

The events which succeed one another in Morocco are keeping public opinion on the alert, and are giving the members of the Opposition an opportunity for harassing

the Government with hostile criticism. The Chamber began a debate on Moroccan affairs last Friday, and will close it on Monday or Tuesday. M. Jaurès, who for some months past had ceased attacking M. Clemenceau, was the first speaker to criticise the Government's policy in Morocco, and to propose the abandonment of all action in Morocco, *i.e.*, the abdication of France. M. Jaurès seems to take no account whatever of national dignity, whereas opinion in the country and amongst the majority of the Chamber, although neither of them are favourable to a Moroccan adventure, is nevertheless definitely opposed to a policy of abdication.<sup>3</sup> M. Ribot, in a biting and vigorous reply to the arguments of the Socialist leader, set forth all the reasons of dignity, expediency, and national honour which obliged France to continue her work in Morocco. M. Ribot, while adding some warning advice, still approves fundamentally of the Government's policy in Morocco.

The most important and the most unlooked for occurrence during Friday's session was the intervention of M. Delcassé in the debate. The former Minister for Foreign Affairs, whose downfall under tragic circumstances in June, 1905, is still in all our minds, had hitherto, out of tact and out of patriotism, abstained from any attempt to justify himself, and his silence had been appreciated here no less than beyond the Eastern frontier.

Did M. Delcassé intervene in the debate on the spur of the moment, or by design? What actually occurred was that upon some allusion by M. Jaurès, M. Delcassé rose and made a speech which created a sensation. Of course, there are many personal reasons which might have induced M. Delcassé to take advantage of an opportunity to confront all those who, while now carrying on his general policy, have deserted and abused him ever since the day when his downfall was decreed as a national sacrifice. In giving an historical retrospect of the friendships acquired for France under his administration, M. Delcassé ascribed to himself the whole credit of a new situation, which, according to him, had made war with Germany impossible. The French Chauvinists enthusiastically supported this assertion, without inquiring (1) Whether the new grouping of the Powers is not the result of a vast programme, conceived with supreme ability in London, and in the carrying out of which M. Delcassé has been the instrument rather than the

initiator? (2) Whether there is any foundation for his assertion that if France had withstood Germany's claims in 1905 and had refused to attend the Algeciras Conference war would not have eventuated?<sup>4</sup> It is very easy for the ex-Minister to put forward that view now, and so enlist on his side the patriotic sympathies of those who suffered under the humiliation of 1905. But, nevertheless, those who yesterday applauded M. Delcassé estimated the effects of his policy very differently at the time of his downfall; and not one of them lent him a hand or ventured a word in his defence when he was offered up as a sacrifice. M. Delcassé may, by cleverly sounding the patriotic note, have succeeded in scoring a notable personal success, but it remains to be seen whether he has not made a big political blunder in reviving thorny subjects, and possibly provoking new political discussions of a dangerous kind in the foreign Press. How highly his speech is appreciated in England is already apparent, and also what criticism it has aroused in Germany.

The paragraph in the *Kölnische Zeitung*, which is the official answer, has already made people here understand how very ill-judged was the burst of enthusiasm that followed on M. Delcassé's speech last Friday; and it is thought that M. Delcassé would have acted wisely had he continued to shroud himself in a prudent silence.

When replying to the various interpellations on Tuesday next, M. Pichon will doubtless confine himself to indicating the Government's proposed line of policy in Morocco; and without attempting to follow M. Delcassé into any discussion of past events, he will perhaps think it advisable to mitigate the effect which some of his statements have created abroad.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) LEGHAIT.

### DELCASSÉ'S REAPPEARANCE.

No. 41.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

SIR,

BERLIN, January 29, 1908.

Following on my report of the day before yesterday, I have the honour to call your attention to another

telegram from Berlin published yesterday in No. 98 of the *Kölnische Zeitung*, and which is undoubtedly inspired.

The paper remarks that the second day of the debate on Morocco in the French Chamber was not marked by the same stormy character as M. Delcassé imparted to the first. All the speakers were moderate in their tone, and it looks as though the deputies who so frantically applauded the late Minister for Foreign Affairs in Friday's session felt a little ashamed of the violence which the latter had displayed.

It says that M. Pichon avoided criticising M. Delcassé beyond what was necessary; that he confined himself to disavowing the mailed fist policy that his predecessor advocated, and merely confirmed what he has often said before—that France intends to keep strictly within the lines laid down by the Act of Algéiras.

I am unable to concur in this view. On the contrary, it seems to me that M. Pichon took M. Delcassé very severely to task. But however that may be, the Berlin telegram notes with satisfaction that M. Pichon's speech, too, was hailed with applause, which in part proceeded from the very same benches that had acclaimed M. Delcassé.

The *Kölnische Zeitung* says that M. Delcassé's provocative tone could not fail to be noticed in Germany, and congratulates itself all the more on the calmness maintained by the German papers, since the French Press, too, is returning to more measured comments. From an ever-increasing number of quarters voices are being raised against M. Delcassé's extreme policy. It is, therefore, to be hoped that he has done no permanent harm.

The officially inspired telegram further notes that the Press of those countries who are on the most friendly terms with France is far from being overjoyed by M. Delcassé's tirade. The English newspapers, it says, are beginning to condemn it, while the Italian and Spanish Press is even more severe. *It has been stated in both countries that France will not be followed in any such policy of adventure as that on which M. Delcassé desires her to embark*, and this had been said with a definiteness which may have contributed to bring about a more reasonable view of the situation.

This conclusion to the semi-official telegram is very concisely worded, no doubt in order that it may be quite inoffensive. But its meaning can only be that

M. Delcassé's speech was applauded because it voiced the secret desires of Frenchmen who are, whether they own it or not, thirsting for revenge; and that M. Pichon's words were applauded by the same benches because, with the assistance of the foreign Press, they had had time, between the Friday and the Monday, to reflect on the danger of giving expression to such desires unless they were prepared immediately to translate them into action.

Even if one cannot admit that considerations of prudence are responsible for the change of tone in the French Chamber, it is not very reassuring to realise that the peace of the world is at the mercy of Parliamentary representatives who are so incapable and so changeable as to veer round in the interval between two sittings on a matter of such importance.<sup>5</sup>

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE GERMAN NAVAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT.

No. 42.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *February 2, 1908.*

SIR,

In my report of November 19 last, I had the honour to send you the text of the Bill for shortening the life of battleships. You will have seen in the papers that it was passed by the Reichstag two days ago, and that nobody opposed it except M. Bebel.<sup>6</sup>

This unanimous vote confirms the views expressed in my previous report, and shows the true state of the relations between Germany and England much better than any interviews between royalties or any official speeches. Nobody here has ever had the absurd and impracticable notion of invading England, but everybody is afraid of England attacking Germany. That is the reason why the Reichstag voted without a murmur such an enormous increase in naval expenditure, despite the fact that Germany's budget shows a deficit which they do not know how to fill, whilst the finances of Prussia are in just as bad a case.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## GERMAN FEARS OF BRITISH ATTACK

No. 43.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *March 28, 1908.*

SIR,

In my report of February 2 last, I took leave to point out that the way in which the Reichstag received the Bill shortening the life of battleships showed the true state of relations between Germany and England better than all official speeches or meetings between royalties. The Bill adds to the material of the navy, accompanied by fresh burdens upon the Treasury of a kind very difficult to meet, and just at a time when Germany's budget is labouring under a deficit that no one has the least idea how to make good. It is submitted only because people feel it necessary to adopt every possible means of self-defence against a possible invasion by England. Only a few years ago a great number of people were against the increase of the navy. To-day it is opposed only by the Socialists.

Yesterday again the Reichstag gave a fresh sign of this feeling. It proceeded in one single sitting to the third reading of the Imperial Budget. The discussion centred almost entirely on the financial difficulties and no positive results were reached. Everyone recognises that some new source of revenue will have to be tapped, and everyone instances those particular taxes which he does not wish to be imposed, without suggesting others that might be available. The Naval Estimates were, however, voted in the form in which the Government introduced them, without encountering opposition from any party, except the Socialist. Even the Centre was as amenable as the other parties in the Chamber, despite the fact that ever since the Chancellor broke with that Party, it has systematically opposed the Government.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## FRANCE, GERMANY AND MOROCCO.

No. 44.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *May 6, 1908.*

SIR,

The most interesting features of the White Book, which I had the honour to enclose with my report of yesterday, is the long-suffering way in which the German Government goes on pretending not to perceive the flagrant contradiction that exists between the statements made by the French Government, which are all absolutely "correct," and the conquest of Morocco, on which France is embarking on the strength of a self-styled mandate from Europe—a mandate that she has never received from anyone—and on the ground that she is being dragged forward by the force of circumstances—circumstances that she calls accidental, but which she has, on the contrary, been sedulously provoking. The assassination of French citizens at Casablanca had no sooner taken place than the French Government (although there was no reason to believe that the Moroccan Government would neglect to trace and punish the guilty parties) retaliated by an even more detestable act than that committed by the murderers. It caused an open town to be bombarded, entailing the massacre of women and children and the ruin of innocent merchants, and this at the very moment when the French delegates at the Hague were giving utterance to all manner of fine humanitarian sentiments.<sup>7</sup>

Paris cannot have failed to foresee that this outrage would create an anti-foreign, and especially an anti-French movement, not only in Morocco, but throughout the whole Moslem world; and that this would afford the desired excuse for proceeding to an occupation officially described as temporary, but evidently designed to continue in perpetuity. The Quai d'Orsay has reverted to M. Delcassé's policy with a cloak of hypocrisy added; and even this is beginning to be discarded. There is no longer any show of displaying impartiality as between the two rival claimants. The French Government has openly sided with Abdul-Aziz,

who, deserted by his subjects, has accepted French protection in order to preserve a semblance of royalty and possibly his life.<sup>8</sup>

Germany puts up with it all. There is nothing else for her to do. The hour for diplomatic negotiations is past. She is only left the choice of affecting ignorance, or war, to which the Emperor is opposed, and which would be condemned by public opinion in Germany. Germany's interest in the affair is too slight to justify the risk of a European conflagration. Indeed, many people think that her interest is *nil*. The Moroccan expedition will cost France a great deal of blood and a great deal of money: why should she be dissuaded from an undertaking which will paralyse her in the region of the Vosges for a long time to come?

Germany's passivity makes the Quai d'Orsay bolder and bolder. You will have read that Mulai-Hafid's two envoys have sailed on a mission to the German Government. The newspaper officially inspired by the French Foreign Office almost orders the Imperial Government not to receive them.

In its weekly review of foreign politics, published this morning, the *Kreuz Zeitung* sharply rebukes this claim to control Germany's affairs. Professor Schiemann, the editor of this review, is, as you know, *persona grata* with the Emperor, and high in favour at the Foreign Office, where he goes to get his information and often his inspiration, although the Review has no official character whatever.

Professor Schiemann's reply may accordingly be noted as a sign that Germany's patience is beginning to give out.

Believe me, etc.,  
(Signed) GREINDL.

## FRANCE, GERMANY AND MOROCCO.

No. 45.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, May 10, 1908.

SIR,

Following on my report of May 6, I have the honour to inform you that Mulai-Hafid's envoys landed at

Hamburg the day before yesterday and reached Berlin yesterday. It is announced in the papers that they will be received and heard to-morrow by Baron Tangwerth von Simmern, who formerly acted as *interim chargé d'affaires* at Tangier, and who is now at the Foreign Office. The *communiqué*, whose tone is inspired, adds that Mulai-Hafid's envoys expect to leave Berlin on May 17 or 18, and to sail from Hamburg on the 20th for Morocco.

The manner in which the *communiqué* is worded implies that this is the only audience that will be granted them. It is not doing much for them to confine their reception to a young man who fills a very subordinate post in the Foreign Office. There was a likelihood that they would not be received at all. The White Book bears witness from cover to cover of the Imperial Government's anxiety to feign belief in the almost incredible statements of M. Pichon and the French Ambassador at Berlin, rather than be forced to reopen once more the Morocco question.

Sultan Abdul-Aziz is the ruler with whom Germany has diplomatic relations. It would have been quite easy to have refused to enter into communications with the envoys of a rebel, had it not been for the arrogance of the Quai d'Orsay's official organ in instructing the Imperial Government to close its doors to them.

Not content with this exhibition of ill-humour in an organ that it can, if need be, disavow, the French Foreign Office, apparently, with the deliberate intention of offending Germany, instructed the French Ambassador at Berlin to speak to Herr von Schön about the visit of Mulai-Hafid's envoys. The conversation took an acrimonious turn, and M. Cambon was not over pleased when he left the Secretary of State. He has left Berlin and will only return after the Morocco envoys have departed. M. Cambon has let the reason for his journey be sufficiently widely known, for the Imperial Government to understand probably beyond a peradventure that his absence indicates displeasure.

The reception of the Moroccan envoys has not been the only disagreeable incident that has occurred recently between Germany and France. The German merchants at Safi have sent an address to the Imperial Foreign Office stating that France intends to occupy the port of Safi, and begging that she may be hindered from

carrying out a design which would involve the petitioners in consequences of a disastrous nature similar to those at Casablanca. The French Government's reply is, that they do not want to seize Safi, but that they do not know to what they may be compelled by the force of circumstances. According to them the town of Safi is in a state of absolute anarchy. The Customs House has ceased to exist, and the German merchants are taking advantage of this to carry on a contraband trade in arms and munitions on a big scale for the benefit of the enemies of France. The Imperial Government declares it has no information of the kind. Paris answers that this is because Germany is represented at Safi by a consul who is a merchant, instead of by an agent who could give a correct version of the state of affairs.

Great hopes of improved relations with France were based upon M. Cambon, who came to Berlin with a reputation for moderation acquired in his other posts. He himself, on the contrary, proves to be mistrustful and suspicious, is perpetually on the look out for hidden meanings, and is moreover badly informed, as all diplomats are who employ spies. His task is not rendered any easier by the attitude taken up by the French Government ever since the peace of Europe became seriously undermined by the policy of the King of England.

It was quite natural on the occasion of the Emperor of Austria's jubilee that the German Emperor should talk of the alliance between the two empires;<sup>9</sup> but one wonders whether the emphasis shown in celebrating the benefits of that alliance and the presence of all the German rulers at Vienna was not due to the anxiety that has been created by the cynicism with which France is violating the Treaty of Algeciras, by England's strange proposals with regard to Macedonia,<sup>10</sup> by the Serbian agitation in Croatia,<sup>11</sup> and by the false reports which the Russian Press has circulated with regard to Turkey's alleged armaments, as though Russia were desirous of making out a case to build up her army again even after her reverses in Manchuria.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE MOORISH MISSION TO GERMANY.

No. 46.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin; to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *May 13, 1908.*

SIR,

Following on my report of May 10, I have the honour to inform you that Mulai-Hafid's envoys were not received by Baron von Simmern until yesterday afternoon. They had sent a letter to the Foreign Office requesting an audience from the Chancellor and announcing that they were charged with an autograph letter from their master for the Emperor. The letter being in Arabic had to be translated. Hence the delay.

The newspapers, which presumably have taken their cue from the Foreign Office, add to this item of news, that it is very unlikely that Mulai Hafid's envoys will be admitted to an interview either with His Majesty or with Prince von Bülow, seeing that they have no official character.

The *National Zeitung* which never publishes any information bearing on foreign affairs until it has scrupulously verified it, says that Herr von Simmern asked Mulai-Hafid's envoys whether, supposing their master to be recognised as Sultan, they could guarantee the safety of Europeans. Whereupon the envoys are said to have replied that Mulai-Hafid would certainly do so, and would prevent any recurrence of such incidents as that of Casablanca, which was a misfortune for Morocco. Mulai-Hafid would be the Sultan of civilisation and progress. He would gladly call in the assistance of Europeans for the construction of high-roads, bridges and railways in Morocco. He would open up all the mines, and would further industry and commerce. He would be delighted that Germany and the other Powers should assist him to raise the people of Morocco to the level of European civilisation. But to attain this end France must first withdraw her troops from Morocco; otherwise the people of Morocco would never settle down quietly. Mulai-Hafid would be glad if Germany, and the other Powers who signed the Act of Algeciras, would intervene to persuade France to with-

draw her troops as soon as possible. The expiation exacted by France from luckless Morocco for the murder of three French workmen was altogether disproportionate to the event. Thousands of Moroccans were slaughtered, including women and children. A whole town was bombarded and destroyed. The countryside was ravaged. Peasants' farms were burnt to the ground, including some belonging to peasants under German protection. It is too much. The envoys expressed the hope that Germany will assist in putting an end to this unhappy state of things.<sup>12</sup>

From the very first, the envoys declared that Mulai-Hafid would throw open his kingdom to all Europeans, who would all have equal rights. I question whether they are so ignorant of European politics as not to know that France does not desire equal rights for all (as we learnt to our cost on the occasion when the Director of Public Works was nominated); and that instead of wishing for the pacification of the country she rather dreads it, since it would deprive her of the pretext she seeks for realising her designs of conquest.

Other incidents have unfortunately been occurring to fan the ill-humour caused by the French Government's ill-judged comments on the visit of Mulai-Hafid's envoys. No doubt you have, like myself, seen in the papers that at Casablanca French officers carried off the legitimisation papers of persons under German protection and threw them away as valueless, after having spat upon them.<sup>13</sup> So far, the German Press has confined itself to reporting the facts without comment.

In my report of May 6 I had the honour to mention to you the reasons which make Professor Schiemann's articles worthy of serious consideration, although his articles are in no sense officially inspired. His weekly review of foreign politics, which appeared this morning in No. 223 of the *Kreuz Zeitung*, is a fresh proof that the patience of the Germans is beginning to be exhausted. Speaking of fresh abuse of Germany by *Le Temps*, the article says that it is time that the position of that paper should be finally cleared up. Every habitual reader, it says, must feel it to be the organ of the French Government. M. Pichon has disavowed it several times, and the sincerity of the Minister for Foreign Affairs cannot be questioned. Still, *Le Temps* continues to publish articles of an unmistakable official nature; and one is

left with the impression that there are in France two policies, one M. Pichon's, and one that of another personage who is more powerful than he, and whose mind is bent on embittering the relations between Germany and France.

Professor Schiemann clearly indicates M. Clemenceau, without naming him. For a long time past he has been supposed here to be in the pay of England.

Professor Schiemann points out that M. Pichon is lavish with solemn declarations which bear no relation to facts, as is shown by the recent German White Book, although the documents published in this collection were submitted for censorship to the French Government, at whose request it is probable that further correspondence has been repressed that would have shown up the contradiction still more strongly.

Professor Schiemann goes on to note with obvious satisfaction the symptoms of discontent that M. Clemenceau's policy is arousing in France.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE NEW "GROUPING" OF THE POWERS.

No. 47.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, May 30, 1908.

SIR,

President Fallières has now returned to Paris, and has no doubt reason to declare himself very well satisfied with the peculiarly warm reception accorded to him by King Edward VII, as well as by the British Government and English people. As has become the fashion in such circumstances, it was solemnly affirmed that the *rapprochement* between the two nations is a menace to nobody, and that its only aim is the preservation of universal peace. The English papers almost unanimously express the opinion that there would be no advantage in converting the entente cordiale into an alliance, which might constitute a serious danger. The *Paris Temps* expresses itself in the same sense, and says that it would be imprudent to contract engagements in the event of a

war (no doubt that war of *revanche* which all Frenchmen still hope for), so long as England has not transformed her military system in such a way as to be able to afford France efficient support on the Continent.

Sir E. Grey stated in the House of Commons that the King of England's journey to Russia would be just such an official visit as those already paid by His Majesty, and that there is no intention of contracting any new treaty with Russia, her relations with England being regulated by the existing convention. Thus the English Minister for Foreign Affairs has cut short the rumours started by certain Press organs of Paris and St. Petersburg that a new triple alliance was in process of formation between England, France, and Russia.

Everything, therefore, is "correct," and in the very unlikely case of the Imperial Government having to express any official opinion during the Parliamentary vacation, it could only state its satisfaction at the improved relations between the European Powers as contributing to ensure quiet throughout the world.

In diplomacy one has to pretend to take words at their face value.

Thus Herr von Schön at his last reception appeared perfectly satisfied with the instructions given to General d'Amade, and professed to believe that the promises which have been given will be religiously kept.

The officially-inspired newspapers have confined themselves to reporting the facts of the interview between the King of England and the President of the French Republic without comment.

The independent Press, which is not bound to similar reticence, does not hesitate to express its uneasiness. Whether it be called alliance, entente, or what you like, that grouping of the Powers, brought into existence by the King of England personally, does exist; and even if it is not a direct and immediate menace to Germany (which it would be going too far to say), it nevertheless constitutes a decrease in the sense of security.

The obligatory declaration of pacific sentiments, which will, no doubt, be repeated at Reval, have very little meaning as emanating from three Powers which, like Russia and England, have just entered, with varying success, on such wars of conquest as those of Manchuria and the Transvaal, for which there was not even any plausible pretext, and no other reason than the desire for

aggrandisement; or which, like France is, at this very moment, in defiance of solemn promises, carrying out the invasion of Morocco, to which her only claim is the cession by England to her of rights which England never herself possessed. And these very same Powers (together with the United States, fresh from a war of aggression against Spain) are those who took up the ultra-Pacifist attitude at the Hague.

For thirty years the Triple Alliance has guaranteed the peace of the world because it was guided by Germany, and Germany was satisfied with the political division of Europe. The new grouping is a danger to that peace, because it is made up of Powers who aim at altering the *status quo*, and who have buried the feuds of centuries in order to bring their purpose to fruition.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## ANGLO-RUSSIAN RELATIONS.

No. 48.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, June 12, 1908.

SIR,

In the course of the toasts proposed at Reval reciprocally by the King of England and the Emperor of Russia, both sovereigns expressed their wish for an amicable settlement of the questions on which they are at issue, and to bring about a *rapprochement* between the two nations, thus furthering the consolidation of universal peace.<sup>14</sup>

Language so perfectly "correct" should cause no annoyance either in official or semi-official quarters. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* said last night that these words are in accordance with that serious section of the English and Russian Press which is counteracting the attempts that are being made to represent the interview at Reval as inspired by inimical intentions towards Germany.

This officially-inspired paragraph is far from corresponding to the view current here in regard to the French President's recent visit to London, the interview at

Reval, and M. Fallières' approaching visit to the Emperor of Russia and to the three Scandinavian courts. Relying, no doubt, upon my making a strictly confidential use of his words, Herr von Schön, in a talk I had with him the day before yesterday, did not conceal from me the painful impression made on him by the agreements which have been concluded under the pretext of guarding against an aggression of which Germany has never dreamed. He went so far as to stigmatise this policy as disloyal, and expects that the new grouping of Powers will be used to bring pressure to bear on Germany over the Eastern question and other outstanding matters. He says once again that the German Emperor and the German nation have for twenty years past given so many pledges of their peaceful intentions that these ought now to be beyond suspicion.

One might add to the Secretary of State's words that European politics are already suffering from the effects of Germany's isolation. You will have noticed, sir, that M. Tittoni in his recent speech, speaking of the Macedonian question, said that it would soon be settled by an understanding between England and Russia. He never said a word about Austria-Hungary, as if there had not been for ten years an understanding between this Power and Russia, which is now destroyed by Baron von Aehrenthal's luckless intervention in the affair of the Mitrowitza Railway.<sup>15</sup> Germany's ally is treated as a negligible quantity, as though she were not amongst all the great Powers the one chiefly interested in the Balkan question.

The only somewhat reassuring symptom to be noted is the want of confidence which recent events have shown to exist between the new friends and the old allies.

In spite of subsequent denials there must have existed some project of strengthening the ties between those Powers whom the King of England has brought together, in no friendly spirit to Germany. *Le Temps*, a paper which, being the semi-official organ of the French Government, is in a position to be accurately informed, appeared so certain of London's desire to transform the *entente cordiale* into an alliance that it was already laying down terms. There must, it said, be such a reform in the English Army as would allow of England furnishing a contingent for a Continental war. That meant that people in Paris did not contemplate the

possibility of being involved in a conflict, from which England might withdraw after she had destroyed Germany's navy and commerce and annexed her colonies without being in a position to protect France or prevent Germany from indemnifying herself at France's expense for the losses she was certain to incur at sea.

England does not see any need for a land army which she does not require for her own use, merely for the purpose of assisting France to conquer Alsace-Lorraine, about which she cares nothing, and she has replied through the unanimous voice of the Press, declining the suggestion put forward by the semi-official French organ. It was only then that *Le Temps* declared it was merely discussing a pure hypothesis. If so, the moment chosen was a singular one to raise a merely doctrinal theory.

At St. Petersburg, too, they must, despite Sir E. Grey's statement in the House, have dreaded the suggestion of an alliance which would expose Russia to the risk of a conflict in which she is not in a position to engage.

Unless it were thought necessary to forestall any such contemplated step, one fails to understand the article which the semi-official *Rossija* published on the eve of the interview at Reval, in which the ancient friendship between Germany and Russia was emphasised in terms much more fervent than were called for by the actual situation. Russia does not intend to let herself be exploited by England, as she herself exploited France, when she borrowed milliards (of francs) from her not, as was hoped at Paris, to further the *revanche*, but for her expedition to the Far East.

The real purpose of the Powers, which England has brought together for the isolation of Germany, is not to be found in the speeches of the Sovereigns, nor in the articles of the official or semi-official papers. Their real aim is so far removed from the phrases they concur in using that they cannot help letting it slip out accidentally. To realise what that aim is, one has only to read *Le Temps'* admonition to the King of Sweden. The Paris paper regards the friendly sentiments manifested by His Majesty towards Germany as an offence towards Russia, of which France feels the effects.

It would be hasty to conclude that because France, England and Russia are mutually suspicious of one another, therefore, the new triple alliance will not be

realised. They are united by their common hatred of Germany, and they may discover real or supposed guarantees against the danger of being dragged into war on behalf of foreign interests.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## MACEDONIAN AFFAIRS.

No. 49.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *July 4, 1908.*

SIR,

I asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs yesterday whether he had not yet received the Anglo-Russian proposals as to the reforms to be introduced into Macedonia, as being a matter in which we are interested from the point of view of the maintenance of friendly relations between the Great Powers, but which concerns us solely from that point of view.

Herr von Schön replied that an agreement does not appear to have been fully concluded yet between Russia and England, and that probably the Great Powers will not receive the proposals that are to be submitted to them for another fortnight at least. The Imperial Government is in no hurry to receive them, being confident that these proposals will be of a sort that will in no wise disturb the harmony that prevails between the Great Powers.

I answered that I hoped it would prove so; but that I cannot help feeling some uneasiness, supposing, as Reuter's Agency announces, it is proposed to increase the number of national guards.

Herr von Schön replied that that would certainly be a danger. The idea had at first been not unfavourably received at Vienna and Berlin, but more careful consideration had shown that it would be tantamount to organising and arming the revolution. The Sublime Porte will obviously start by rejecting the programme of the Powers *in toto*. But since it does contain some good proposals, it may be possible by negotiating with the Ottoman Government to conclude a bargain by which

the useful reforms will be retained and dangerous schemes set aside.

I said there was another point which was, I thought a cause for uneasiness, *e.g.*, the way in which the preliminary negotiations are being carried on between London and St. Petersburg to the exclusion of Austria-Hungary, although the latter is most immediately interested in Balkan affairs.

Herr von Schön did not contradict me. He briefly replied that the understanding arrived at at Murzsteg<sup>16</sup> was evidently altogether at an end; and I, of course, did not pursue such a delicate subject.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

### FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS: SIR FRANK LASCELLES' RETIREMENT.

No. 50.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *July 18, 1908.*

SIR,

One of my colleagues yesterday asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what view was to be taken of the approaching visit of the French President to the Emperor of Russia. Herr von Schön replied that this interview has no political significance: it was the Reval interview that had. M. Fallières' visit is only what might be called its necessary corollary.

My colleague pointed out that the French President's visit to the King of England had nevertheless been regarded at Berlin as an important event. Herr von Schön replied that it had actually been of importance, but that the circumstances were at that time quite different. It was the first of the interviews planned. The personal policy of the King of England is frankly hostile to Germany. From information received by the Imperial Government it appears that England would have liked to go much further than she succeeded in doing in the direction of the entente with France and Russia. France it was which refused. Before any rumours of the alliance had been circulated, and whilst M. Fallières was on his visit to London, M. Cambon saw

Herr von Schön and told him that the French Government was placed in a delicate position. Without explaining himself further, he begged the Secretary of State not to credit any disquieting reports that might reach him, and to believe that France was sincerely desirous of peace.

Herr von Schön said in conclusion that at the present time it was France itself which was actually bringing pressure to bear in the interests of peace.

May I beg you to compare this, my present report, with the one I had the honour to submit to you under date of June 12 last. You will remember that in the interview of which I then gave you an account, Herr von Schön described England's policy as "disloyal." In the same report, I told you that the Press campaign being carried on by the two papers which draw their inspiration respectively from the Foreign Offices of Paris and St. Petersburg inclined me to think that, in spite of subsequent denials, there had been a project for strengthening the ties between the Powers which the King of England has brought together out of no friendly spirit to Germany, and that the scheme had come to nothing because France and Russia had rejected it. A month ago this was a mere guess on my part; it is now positive information.

My colleague also spoke to the Secretary of State about the manœuvres of the English Fleet in the region of the Danish Straits, and which appear to be a general rehearsal of operations of war for ultimate adoption. Herr von Schön replied that in any case the proceeding was not a friendly one: but that one can expect nothing else on the part of England. Otherwise the Secretary of State thought the situation had become somewhat less strained during the last few days. This he attributes partly to the attitude adopted by France and Russia; but partly also to the King of England's feeling that he has not got the "City" with him, and that apart from the big business world there is a nucleus of Englishmen which does not desire to push things to extremes.

I am not sending you the text of the two speeches delivered on July 12 to the French Colony by the French Ambassador at Berlin, since the Belgian newspapers have no doubt published them in full. I will merely remark that what M. Cambon says about the present attitude of France tallies with Herr von Schön's opinion.

I have further, Sir, to tell you about the impending resignation of the British Ambassador, who left Berlin some little time ago and who will only return in the autumn to present the papers recalling him. This resignation is only voluntary in form. It was forced on Sir Frank Lascelles by the British Government, and he himself much desired to remain at Berlin, where his continued presence was urged, unsuccessfully, on London by the German Government.

Sir Frank Lascelles is a diplomat of unusual insight, very sound judgment, and absolute honour. Age has not yet affected him either mentally or physically, and he enjoys, and thoroughly deserves, the confidence of the German Emperor and of all his colleagues. If the British Government is depriving itself of the services of so valuable a diplomatist who has not yet attained the age limit, it can only be because Sir Frank Lascelles has been working for fifteen years, undeterred by numerous rebuffs, to bring about a friendly understanding between Germany and England. The zeal with which he has worked to dispel misunderstandings that he thought absurd and highly mischievous for both countries does not fall in with the political views of his Sovereign.<sup>17</sup>

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## ANGLO-FRENCH RELATIONS.

No. 51.

MONSIEUR A. LEGHAIT, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *July 20, 1908.*

SIR,

The President of the Republic left France on the 18th of the month to pay official visits to the Emperor of Russia and to the Kings of Sweden, Denmark and Norway. M. Fallières, responding to the essential purpose which underlies France's foreign policy and by the opinion and wishes of the country, felt it incumbent upon him to pay his respects to the head of the friendly and allied nation. At the same time the President will return the visits paid him by the sovereigns of Denmark

and Norway, and will take advantage of being in that neighbourhood to pay a visit of ceremony to the King of Sweden.

M. Fallières' tour, which is founded on motives of courtesy, bears at the same time a political character which is not without importance at this moment, when the grouping of the Powers fills all thoughts.

France, bound to England's policy, wishes to gain solid support to the latter among the Northern Powers. Although there may be for the moment no question of a new triple alliance, yet it is desired to prevent these countries from becoming too intimately connected under the *ægis* of Germany. From this standpoint France is loudly proclaiming that the maintenance of peace is the aim of her policy, and M. Pichon will continue to reiterate this assertion at the Courts he is about to visit, just as he does here, and to insist that French diplomacy, true to its alliances, friendships, and engagements, will practise a policy of understanding among all the Powers and general reconciliation. He will seek to show that the aim of this policy is neither to set one set of Powers at variance with the other nor to bring France into opposition to any of them.

It is certain that the policy of France is actuated by peaceful intentions, but, dragged along in England's orbit, will France always be able to remain mistress of events and prevent dangerous causes of irritation from arising on the other side of the Rhine?

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) LEGHAIT.

## THE ANNEXATION OF BOSNIA.

No. 52.

MONSIEUR A. LEGHAIT, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, October 8, 1908.

SIR,

In pursuance of the information which I had the honour to submit to you in my letter of yesterday, I hasten to send you herewith various articles from to-day's *Temps* relating to the Balkan incident.<sup>18</sup> M. Isvolsky's statement is exceptionally interesting, seeing that he

himself has affirmed its accuracy. It follows from this statement that the information was well founded which I gave you yesterday as to Russia's aim in proposing that a Conference should be assembled. Russia desires to tear up the Treaty of Berlin which was directed against her, and relies for that on the support of France and England. One doubts, however, whether Germany will look quietly on and see Prince Bismarck's work undone.

From interviews that I have had with various Ambassadors, the question which has arisen seems to be regarded as very delicate, very complicated and very difficult to settle.

It will not be easy to succeed in bringing together a conference, and one does not know what reception Russia's invitation will meet with. It will depend on the programme, and any agreement as to this will be very laborious, in view of the accomplished fact that has taken place and the "compensations" that are everywhere demanded. However, people seem to hope that all the Powers will agree to the conference, for, as it was remarked to me, the desire to maintain peace is so unanimous and so deep-seated that it will override everything else.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) LEGHAIT.

## EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES TO TEXT.

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<sup>1</sup>At the time of the first Morocco crisis and Delcassé's resignation, Prince Bülow—then Chancellor—remarked in one of his speeches that Germany would certainly not have gone to war about Morocco, any more than she would have gone to war in 1870 about the candidature for the Crown of Spain. He added that both these questions might, however, have brought about the necessity that Germany should defend her honour, good repute, and position in the world. In his book ("Imperial Germany," Cassell, 1914) he says, speaking of the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904: "The two Powers disposed arrogantly of a great and most important field of colonial interests, without even deigning to take the German Empire into consideration. (He previously elaborates the German case, based on the Madrid Convention of 1880, the German-Moroccan commercial Treaty of 1890, etc.) It was clearly an attempt on the part of the Western Powers to lay claim to a right of decision in matters of international policy. The French authorities did not hesitate to act immediately upon the Anglo-French arrangements, as if the signatory Powers of the Treaty of Madrid had no existence at all. . . . Delcassé, a most gifted and energetic statesman, but too easily swayed by his feelings where Germany was concerned, cherished the hope of confronting us with a *fait accompli* in Morocco. He knew that in so doing he would deal our prestige in the world a severe blow. We had important and promising economic interests in Morocco which were seriously injured by French action. In addition to this, our dignity and our newly-won position in international politics were at stake. The fact that the signatory Powers of the Treaty of Madrid had been ignored in the Anglo-French Moroccan arrangement was equivalent *in specie* to an affront to the German Empire. France had made a friendly treaty with England, secret negotiations were being carried on with Spain, Russia was not a signatory Power, Italy went her own way in the Mediterranean, the affairs of Morocco were of little interest to the United States, and there was no reason to expect serious opposition from the smaller States of Europe. Thus only Austria and, above all, Germany were clearly set aside."

<sup>2</sup>By no means all British papers. The *Times*, of course, was lyrical, and provocative as ever, and its satellites followed suit. But the Liberal Press was very much the other way about.

<sup>3</sup>Jaurès and the French Socialists generally, with a fair sprinkling of the Radicals, were anxious that the Moroccan adventure should be abandoned before France was committed beyond redemption to the policy of conquest and annexation which the Government was clearly pursuing while pretending not to. It might have been an "abdication" from the imperialist point of

view. But Jaurès had a different conception of what constituted the real interests of the French people. He realised that an imperialistic policy in Morocco, initially engineered in such a way as to make Germany hostile to it, resting upon a bad case, legally and morally, would sooner or later involve France and Europe in war. And he did his utmost to prevent it. Delcassé represented, quite honestly according to his lights, imperialism, even war as the outcome of indulgence in it, as a national interest. Jaurès believed that the supreme national interest was peace and the avoidance of dubious schemes of over-sea conquest calculated to jeopardise peace. On this occasion he urged that France should bravely and definitely cut the Moroccan entanglement; that the Act of Algeciras committed her in no way to intervention, and that if intervention were necessary, Europe collectively, not France alone, should play the policeman.

<sup>4</sup> See Note 33, Part I., and Note 3, Part II.

In stating that thanks to the "friendships" he had secured for France, France could have persisted in refusing to go to a conference over Morocco in 1905, Delcassé was, of course, referring to his Cabinet statements in 1905, viz., that he had secured the promise of British naval and military aid in that contingency. (See, too, Note 1 above.)

<sup>5</sup> The French papers were for the most part significantly severe, apart from jingo organs like the *Echo de Paris*, *Libre Parole*, etc. The *Figaro* described Delcassé's performance as an attempt at self-glorification, and compared him to Daudet's famous incarnation of bombast, Tartarin de Tarascon. The *République Française* poured contempt upon the Chamber as a "crowd with a crowd's mob-instincts, passions and hysterical emotion."

<sup>6</sup> It was the new Amendment Act (of the original German naval programme of ship construction: Naval Law, June, 1900) which gave rise to the bitter and discreditable "panic" of 1909 and further estranged Anglo-German relations. It would be impossible in the limit of a footnote to give an adequate account of a controversy characterised by Mr. Alan Burgoyne, M.P., editor of the *Navy League Annual*, as "one of the most portentous pieces of Parliamentary humbug ever practised on the electorate." It suffices to say that the single clause of the Amendment Act shortened the life of a German battleship cruiser by five years, a change which the initiation of the new Dreadnought class of battleship by us had admittedly brought about by reducing the anticipated German strength of the German Navy in 1917, on the basis of the static programme of 1900, to the extent of four battleships. The Amendment Act provided for one more battleship in each of the years 1908-11, but did not increase the total number laid down in the 1900 programme. This was the groundwork for the wild Press and party-political campaign that ensued, in which Germany was accused of a secret acceleratory programme.

The charge was untrue, and was subsequently acknowledged to have been so by Mr. Winston Churchill as First Lord of the Admiralty. Its originator was Mr. Mulliner, the managing director of the Coventry Ordnance Works, in which John Brown & Co. and Cammell, Laird & Co. held the bulk of the shares. He was, therefore, a party interested in the armament business. Yet Mr. Asquith, Sir E. Grey, and Mr. McKenna, then First Lord, accepted

the statements made by him, and delivered a series of alarmist speeches in which they virtually accused the German Government of deliberate falsehood for treacherous purposes. And, of course . . . we put down more Dreadnoughts; and, equally of course, the poison of suspicion and resentment grew on both sides of the North Sea. Nevertheless the German Amendment Act came at an inopportune moment, for Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had reduced the Cawdor programme of ship construction, and we had only two Dreadnoughts laid down for 1908. On the other hand, two super-Dreadnoughts were building in British yards on account of Brazil, subject to the usual clause that the British Government could take them over if necessary. British naval expenditure in 1907-08 was £32,735,767; German, £14,225,000. The relative strength of the British and French combined fleets at that period, compared with the German, was: Battleships 78, armoured cruisers 53, destroyers 190. German: Battleships 22, armoured cruisers 8, destroyers 61. According to Lord Fisher, the position in March, 1907, was this—England: Dreadnoughts, 10 built and building, 123 destroyers, 40 submarines. Germany: not one Dreadnought, 48 destroyers, one submarine. In October, 1907, Sir George Clark, secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, stated that the British Navy was “stronger than at any previous time in all history.” It was this overwhelming strength of the British Navy in 1908 which appealed to Lord Fisher as a particularly appropriate occasion to “Copenhagen” the German Fleet. (See his own statements in “Memories.”) See, in particular, his letter to Lord Esher, March 21, 1909: “The unswerving intention of four years has now culminated in two complete Fleets in home waters, each of which is incomparably superior to the whole German Fleet mobilised for war. Don’t take my word! Count them, see them for yourselves! You will see them next June. This can’t alter for years, even were we supinely passive in our building: but it won’t alter, because we will have eight Dreadnoughts a year. *So sleep quiet in your beds!*” . . . “*The Germans are not building in this feverish haste to fight you! No! it’s the daily dread they have of a second Copenhagen, which they know a Pitt or a Bismarck would execute on them! Cease building or I strike!*” And again, on September 20, 1911: “I happen to know in a curious way (but quite certainly) that the Germans are in a blue funk of the British Navy. . . .”

Speaking at the Queen’s Hall on July 28, Mr. Lloyd George said: “I want to put two considerations to you from the German point of view. . . . Men have not got the imagination to project themselves into the position of the other party. Now let us consider for a moment. You say, ‘Why should Germany be frightened of us? Why should she build because of us?’ Let me put two considerations to you. We started it; it is not they who have started it. We had an overwhelming preponderance at sea which could have secured us against any conceivable enemy. We were not satisfied; we said, ‘Let there be Dreadnoughts.’ . . . Well, let me put another consideration before you which I don’t think is sufficiently pointed out. We always say we must have what we call a ‘two-Power standard.’ And what does that mean? You must have a Navy large enough to oppose a combination of any two naval Powers. So, if we had Russia and France, Germany and France, Germany and Italy, we should always have a fleet

large enough to defend our shores against any combination of the two greatest naval Powers in Europe. This has been our standard. Look at the position of Germany. Her Army is to her what our Navy is to us—her sole defence against invasion. She has not got a two-Power standard. She may have a stronger Army than France, than Russia, than Italy, than Austria, but she is between two great Powers who, in combination, could pour in a vastly greater number of troops than she has. Don't forget that when you wonder why Germany is frightened at alliances and understandings and some sorts of mysterious working which appear in the Press, and hints in the *Times* and *Daily Mail*. . . . Here is Germany in the middle of Europe, with France and Russia on either side, and with a combination of armies greater than hers. Suppose we had had a possible combination which would lay us open to invasion—suppose Germany and France, or Germany and Austria, had fleets which, in combination, would be stronger than ours. Would we not be frightened, would we not build, would we not arm? Of course we should. I want our friends, who think that because Germany is a little frightened she really means mischief to us, to remember that she is frightened for a reason which would frighten us under the same circumstances."

The reader may be referred to Mr. F. W. Hirst's "The Six Panics" (Methuen); "How Diplomats Make War," F. Neilson (Huebsch); "Memories," Lord Fisher (Hodder and Stoughton); "The War of Steel and Gold," Brailsford (Bell and Sons); "My Memoirs," Von Tirpitz (Hurst and Blackett); "How Europe Armed for War," Newbold (Blackfriars Press); The Kaiser's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth (when First Sea Lord) of February 14, 1908; *Hansard*, etc.

<sup>7</sup> See Note 40, Part III.

<sup>8</sup> There were rival claimants to the throne of Morocco in the persons of Abdulaziz and his brother, Mulai-Hafid. Abdulaziz was regarded by his subjects as a mere tool of the French—as, indeed, he had become. He had been deposed by the Moors (January, 1908) and Mulai-Hafid proclaimed in his stead, whereupon Abdulaziz had sought French protection. In January, June and December 1908, the French Chamber passed resolutions asserting France's intention of respecting the Algeciras Act.

<sup>9</sup> The Austrian Emperor's jubilee was held with much pomp at Vienna. There was a great gathering of Teutonic royalties.

<sup>10</sup> This refers, no doubt, to Sir E. Grey's proposal to appoint a Christian Governor of Macedonia in concert with Russia in 1903. Ever since the agreement known as the Murzsteg programme for Macedonian reform, concluded in 1903 between Russia and Austria-Hungary, Macedonia had been regarded by those two Powers as a kind of joint preserve which neither had the right to disturb, or allow anyone else to disturb. The British Government never acquiesced in that view. The Murzsteg programme provided for an Inspector-General and the reorganisation of the gendarmerie by foreign officers. This was agreed to by the Sultan. But conditions in Macedonia did not improve. A financial committee was appointed in 1905. Ever since 1906 Austria had complained that Isvolsky was not adhering to the Murzsteg programme, but was pursuing a particular line of policy in conjunction with England. Was there anything behind Anglo-Russian negotiations over

Macedonia? Shrewd observers of the Near Eastern problem—such as Blunt and Miss Durham—believe that Russia was using Macedonian troubles as the first step in the reopening of the whole Balkan question (e.g., Blunt's *Diaries op. cit.*) with the support of Great Britain, which since the Anglo-Russian agreement of August, 1907, was moving in the wake of Russian policy. The substantial accuracy of this view is borne out by the secret Buchlau agreement of September 15 between Isvolsky (Russian Foreign Minister) and Aerenthal (Austrian Foreign Minister). (See Chronology.) The general situation at this time resembled the opening moves of a vast game of chess between the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance for predominance in the Balkans, Russia and Austria being respectively supported by their several partners.

<sup>11</sup> Anti-Austrian agitation by the Serbs was particularly violent at this time.

<sup>12</sup> This passage refers to the massacre of Casablanca.

<sup>13</sup> It had for many years been a practice in Morocco for individual Moors to escape from the obligations of Moorish citizenship by becoming the "protected" subjects of European States diplomatically represented in the country. They received "legitimation" papers and became immune from Moorish law. The system gave rise to many abuses, and one of Lord Salisbury's objects in dispatching the Euan Smith mission to Fez in 1891-2 was to do away with them. The mission was wrecked by French intrigue. (See "Ten Years Secret Diplomacy.")

<sup>14</sup> On June 9 King Edward left Marienbad to meet the Tsar at Reval. Isvolsky, the Tsar's Foreign Minister, and Clemenceau, the French Premier, came to Marienbad some days before and conferred with the King. The King was accompanied by Sir Charles Hardinge, Permanent Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office. Lord Fisher, First Sea Lord, was also with him, and tells us in his "Memories" that the King's speech "changed the atmosphere of Russian feelings towards England from suspicion to cordial trust." Stolypin, the Russian Premier, accompanied the Tsar, and told Fisher that "the German frontier was his one and only thought, and he was devoting all his life to make that frontier impregnable against Germany, both in men, munitions and strategic arrangements."

<sup>15</sup> In January, Aerenthal (Austrian Foreign Minister) applied to the Sultan for a concession for a railway through the territory known as the Sandjak of Novi-Bazaar, which would link up the Bosnian railway system with Salonika. The Sandjak, which had been occupied by Austro-Hungarian troops since the Berlin Congress of 1878, is the territory (then nominally Turkish, like Bosnia) separating Serbia from Montenegro. Aerenthal's move was a counter to the Anglo-Russian conversations over Macedonia: it was the second move in the game, and was, in effect, a breach of the Murzsteg agreement (Note 10). It was countered in turn by Serbia, backed by Russia, demanding a concession for a railway from the Danube to the Adriatic. These moves and counter-moves can only be intelligible to the reader who has not made a close study of the Near Eastern question, by the aid of a map, and by a broad knowledge of the main purpose behind them, i.e., the rivalry between Russia and Austria for the hegemony of the Balkans. Russia's aim was Constantinople. Checked by Britain

after the Russo-Turkish War of 1876, Russia sought to make of Bulgaria her advanced sentinel to that end, and with some justification, since the war had secured Bulgaria's independence from Turkish rule. But Bulgaria developed a strong nationalism which would not harmonise with the part Russia desired her to play. Similarly (until 1908) Austria's objective was Salonika, and she sought to use Serbia for her purposes as Russia had attempted to use Bulgaria. But as with Bulgaria, so with Serbia. At a given stage Serbia declined to play Austria's game, and was dragooned by Austria just as Bulgaria had been bullied by Russia. Russia intrigued against Austria in Serbia, and Austria intrigued against Russia in Bulgaria.

<sup>16</sup> See Notes 14 and 15.

<sup>17</sup> See Part III. (Note 34).

<sup>18</sup> The proclamation of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria.

## PART V.

[1909.]

French Policy in Morocco—King Edward VII.'s Visit to Berlin—The Balkan Tangle—Anglo-German Rivalry—Italy and the Triple Alliance—French-German Relations—The Potsdam Meeting—The Tsar's Visit to Paris.

## PART V.

### Chronology of Principal Events in 1909.

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Serbia continues to make preparations for war over Bosnia.

*January.*

Germany declares she will support her ally, Austria, in regard to the annexation of Bosnia .....*February.*

Russian Army vote of 39 millions of roubles. Meeting of the German Chancellor and Italian Foreign Minister at Venice.

*February.*

Franco-German Declaration over Morocco .....*February.*

Serbia agrees to recognise the annexation .....*March.*

Great naval scare movement in Britain, led by Mr. Balfour.

*March.*

Counter-revolution in Turkey ; its suppression by Young Turks.

*April.*

Russia intervenes in the internal affairs of Persia in favour of the Shah as against the Persian Nationalists .....*June-September.*

Secret Agreement (revealed in 1919) between Russia and Italy signed at Racconigi by which Italy undertook to adopt a benevolent attitude towards Russia when she thought the moment opportune for raising anew the question of Russian warships passing through the Dardanelles, and Russia undertook to adopt a benevolent attitude towards Italy in the matter of Tripoli. *October.*

Russo-Bulgarian Secret Military Convention .....*December.*

DESPATCHES FROM THE BELGIAN MINISTER  
AND THE BELGIAN *CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES* IN  
PARIS, AND THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN  
BERLIN.

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THE FRENCH SOCIALISTS AND MOROCCO.

No. 53.

M. A. LEGHAIT, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *January 19, 1909.*

SIR,

The discussion in the Chamber of Deputies about Morocco, which was begun last Friday, came to an end yesterday. After expressing some vain regrets, applauded by the extreme Left, as to the more strict neutrality which the Government ought, according to his views, to have observed between the two Sultans fighting for power, M. Jaurès resumed his attacks against the Government's Moroccan policy. He restated his contention that the Government should aim at an immediate evacuation and, consequently, at an abandonment of all the advantages which have been acquired by the successive conventions from 1901 up to the Act of Algeciras.

He criticised the instructions given to General d'Amade and General Lyautey, which, in his view, conceal definite plans of occupation. He demanded the publication of the reports of General Lyautey. But M. Pichon refused them, declaring that the reports are not concerned with an occupation, but with the organisation of a Franco-Moroccan police force postulated in the treaties. In the second half of his speech M. Jaurès sought to widen the basis of his interpellation and to envisage the Moroccan question as part of the general situation that has arisen from the latest developments in the Balkans. He said

that if France and Germany are to reach an understanding which would safeguard the peace of Europe, German interests in Morocco must be taken into account.

M. Denys Cochin succeeded M. Jaurès at the tribune, and made himself the mouthpiece of the grievances of the Right against the Moroccan policy of the Government. He did not believe that this was the moment to seek a *rapprochement* with Germany. Germany has continually supported the fanatical elements in Islam which are directed against France. He holds the view that the projected evacuation of the Shawiya would be a mistake, and he recommends a policy of energetic action in Morocco.

M. Pichon had no difficulty in answering these clever and idealistic speeches, which did not face realities. The Foreign Minister demonstrated once again, with even more precision, clearness and eloquence than usual, what is, and will continue to be, the line of action of the Government in Morocco. "We desire," he said, "neither protectorate nor conquest,<sup>1</sup> but respect for international conventions and the advantages to which they entitle us. We shall continue to observe the strictest neutrality in the internal struggles of the country." The Minister explained in detail the principles, the results achieved, and the future programme of his policy.

The principles: A policy of non-intervention would be fatal to the dignity, the interests and the rights of France, which must, even at the price of heavy sacrifices, carry out the mandate for which it asked concurrently with Spain; and that it cannot allow third parties to intervene along the frontiers of its African possessions. It must, finally, ensure the execution of all its agreements with the Moroccan Government. This could not be taken to mean a liquidation of the Morocco problem, but rather the methodical carrying out of agreements and engagements.

The results so far obtained by the application of these principles M. Pichon characterised as follows: "Thanks to us, order has nowhere been disturbed; the safety of the foreign settlements has been guaranteed; commercial transactions have been able to develop freely; we have organised a police system which is everywhere effective. By economic agreements we have composed the conflicting interests that existed between ourselves and other countries. We have begun giving practical expressions

to our agreements along the frontier, where the position in Algeria has never been more secure.”

As to the programme, M. Pichon summarised the instructions given to M. Regnault, who heads the mission to Fez. The evacuation of Shawiya<sup>2</sup> has been begun, and will gradually be proceeded with as soon as the Sultan has succeeded in making the region safe. France has the right to an indemnity, and will demand it, while showing herself as conciliatory as possible over the method of payment. As regards the frontier zone between Algeria and Morocco, General Lyautey's only mission is to carry out the agreement of 1902 without *arrière-pensée*.

To sum up, we may conclude that France wants to preserve her privileged position in Morocco, firmly to maintain her rights in that region, and to remain scrupulously faithful to the Algeciras Agreement. But it is not likely that she will take account of the advice of M. Jaurès, and it will not be on Moroccan territory that she will make any concessions with a view to facilitate an understanding with Germany in the Balkans.

The Moroccan policy of M. Pichon was approved of by a vote giving the Government a majority of 249.

I am, yours, etc.,

(Signed) LEGHAIT.

## EDWARD VII. AND THE KAISER.

No. 54.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *February 13, 1909.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

The King and Queen of England left Berlin last night, after a visit which has lasted four days. Nothing was left undone by the Court and the Municipality of Berlin to make the reception given to their Majesties as splendid and as cordial as possible. The King of England has been on the throne eight years. He has met the German Emperor several times, but he had not before paid an official visit to Berlin, although he had discharged this courtesy obligation in the majority of European capitals. This reluctance on the part of the King of England was interpreted here, and not without reason, as one of the

symptoms of the coldness prevailing between the two Sovereigns and of the strained relations between the two countries. The situation is felt by everyone here to be oppressive, as it constitutes a permanent danger for the Empire. A *rapprochement* would long ago have been effected if this had depended solely upon the Emperor, the Imperial Government and the German people. Advances have been frequent and always unsuccessful. It is now hoped that the King of England's visit shows a disposition to modify the openly *anti-German* policy which he has personally directed. The friendly tone of the toasts exchanged at the gala dinner and the pacific intentions manifested by the two Sovereigns have made a favourable impression. Nevertheless, the tone of the Press, though polite, is reserved. Before the arrival of the King the papers had warned their readers not to exaggerate the possible results of the meeting. There is a feeling of expectancy as to whether deeds will correspond to words, for too many disappointments have been experienced for confidence to reign.

The King of England declares that the preservation of peace has always been the goal of his efforts. He has not stopped saying this since the beginning of the successful diplomatic campaign which aimed at the isolation of Germany. But one cannot refrain from observing that the peace of the world has never been more seriously jeopardised than since the King of England busied himself with trying to consolidate it.<sup>3</sup>

The attitude of England in the Balkan question has been calculated to at least retard the solution of a conflict which places Germany in the most painful and delicate position.<sup>4</sup> It bears a strong resemblance to that which the British Government took up on the question of the Congo. It professed a desire that Belgium should annex the Congo while at the same time initiating a diplomatic action which nearly wrecked it. Is this pure stupidity?

The visit of the King of England coincides with a considerable increase in the [British] naval budget, with the construction of new battleships of the *Dreadnought* type, and with the formation of the most formidable squadron that has ever put to sea, and whose home port is in the North Sea, at a spot as near as possible to the coasts of Germany. Is this solely to guard against an eventual attack which Germany is not at all in a position to undertake?

The agitation for the creation of a territorial army continues. England does not need it for her defence. What purpose can it serve if England does not entertain any *arrière-pensée* of aggression on the continent?<sup>5</sup>

These reflections force themselves upon one and explain Germany's hesitation in regarding the easing of the situation as an accomplished fact.

According to information given to the newspapers, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Hardinge, who accompanied the King of England to Berlin, paid the Chancellor a long visit, and, naturally, politics were touched upon. The problems of the day were talked over, and on none of them is there any conflict of interests between the two countries. No actual arrangement was come to.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 55.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *February 17, 1909.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

In my report of February 13 I had the honour to report to you the impression made on German public opinion by the visit of the King and Queen of England. The impression made upon the Imperial Government is the same. The King of England, suffering from a cold, and obviously wearied by the festivities offered him, was very silent. His Majesty had no political conversations with the Imperial Chancellor. He spoke only a few minutes with Prince Bülow after the breakfast (luncheon) at the British Ambassador's in the presence of a third person, and on quite indifferent topics. The demands of courtesy were thus just satisfied.

Sir C. Hardinge's conversations with the Imperial Chancellor and with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs did not go beyond generalities. Both sides recognised that the greatest efforts should be made in order to prevent a war arising from the Balkan question. A declaration in this sense was, so to speak, obligatory:

it is of no great importance therefore. More significant is the fact that both sides were agreed on the necessity of calling a conference for the purpose, not of revising, but of registering the result of the pending negotiations between the most interested Powers. Thus Sir C. Hardinge took the Austrian point of view.<sup>6</sup>

Both sides agreed to declare themselves satisfied with the result of the Berlin meeting. The communications to the newspapers were drawn up in this sense.

Up to a certain point the satisfaction on the German side is sincere. Gratitude was felt towards Sir C. Hardinge in that he made no allusion to burning questions. He spoke neither of the limitation of naval armaments, nor of the Bagdad railway.

The Imperial Government took steps that the public should not believe the meeting to have been a failure, and, on the other hand, that it should have no illusions as to the results obtained. It is usual, after the visit of a Sovereign, to publish in a prominent position in *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* a clearly inspired article, full of somewhat exaggerated satisfaction as to the unity of political views disclosed at the meeting. On this occasion the *communiqués* to the Press are a little less emphatic.

The situation was very accurately described in the weekly review of foreign politics which is published in No. 79 of the *Kreuz Zeitung* of early this morning. Professor Schiemann, whose great authority as a journalist and whose relationship with the Chancellory are known to you, states that King Edward's visit passed off well, and that Press and public paid all due respect to His Majesty. He adds that an answer can hardly be given to the question as "to what extent King Edward's visit can be called an event of political importance" before five or six weeks. "We will wait and see," he says, "whether by then public opinion in England will have calmed down on the subject of the German peril; for as long as this phantom weighs like a nightmare on the English, everything is possible. One must, therefore, watch the attitude of the *Times*, *Standard*, *National Review* and their associates in order to ascertain whether the anti-German propaganda campaign is to be continued, or whether it will at length cease. For the rest, it is acknowledged that friendly political conversations took place, but that no understanding eventuated."

One cannot express the situation better than by saying that even if the King of England does possess an honest desire to approach Germany, he would, in spite of his great personal influence, be unable to realise his wish as long as a change had not taken place in English public opinion.

I am, yours,  
(Signed) GREINDL.

### THE NAVAL "SCARE."

No. 56.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *March 22, 1909.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

It is unnecessary for me to report to you on the debates regarding the navy which took place in the Budget Commission of the Reichstag at the same time as those in the English House of Commons. The papers are full of the matter, and I have nothing to add to their reports. I should only like to remark that, reading the speeches made in London as to what the strength of the English naval forces ought to be in order to provide against any danger, one would be led to imagine that apart from Great Britain, Germany is the only Power possessed of a navy. The German navy was the only navy referred to, as though others did not exist, and this, one month after the King of England's visit to Berlin, during which so many hearty toasts were exchanged! This exclusive and almost hypnotic anxiety is more significant than any obligatory official courtesies. No doubt were the latter lacking there would be cause for alarm, but their fulfilment really means nothing at all. After, as before, the ostensible *rapprochement*, the relationship between the two countries remains governed by deep mutual distrust.<sup>7</sup>

I am, etc.,  
(Signed) GREINDL.

## ANGLO-GERMAN NAVAL RIVALRY.

No. 57.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *March 31, 1909.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

When I had the honour of reporting to you yesterday that in his speech on foreign politics Prince Bülow did not touch upon the question of the limitation of naval armaments, I was not yet in possession of the report of the second speech which the Chancellor held in the sitting of the previous day.

In this second speech, as a result of questions put to him in the course of the debate, Prince Bülow was forced to express himself upon the English proposal, or, if one prefers, the English suggestion. He did this as briefly as possible. He limited himself to repeating the explanation which Baron von Schön had given in the Budget Commission, and the text of which I sent to you in my report of March 25. He only added that the development of the German fleet was solely inspired by the needs of defence of the coasts and the protection of trade; that it contained nothing secret, and that the Imperial Government had no intention of hastening its execution. In 1912 Germany would possess 13 capital ships of the new type, three of which were cruisers; all rumours to the contrary were inaccurate.

The Reichstag did not demand any further information. It gave a friendly reception to this passage of Prince Bülow's speech, as it did the rest of it. Although the Chancellor has many opponents, and even numerous enemies, his delineation of the foreign policy of Germany was approved by all parties, with the exception of the Social Democrats, be it well understood, but including the Centre. Count v. Hertling, who spoke in the name of the latter group, approved of it, at the same time declaring that the support given to the foreign policy of the Empire did not imply a vote of confidence, which, moreover, the Chancellor did not probably require.

By a strange coincidence, at the same time that the Reichstag was trying to touch as little as possible on the question of the limitation of naval armaments, the

question was the subject of a thorough-going debate in the English Parliament. The Opposition had provoked it by moving a vote of censure, and the Government took up the discussion of the subject by giving an explicit reply. Sir Edward Grey, while declaring that there was no occasion to reproach Germany with the fact that she had not embraced the English views, at the same time expressed his lively regrets that the English proposal had been refused. He said that he had absolute confidence in the communications he had received from the German Government on the naval programme, but he added that the communications did not constitute an engagement; besides which there were omissions in them which gave England the right to feel threatened in her vital interests.<sup>8</sup>

The English Press, which does not need to use the same reserves as the British Government, gives livelier expression to its ill temper.

The state of mind prevailing in England now is similar to that of France between the years 1866-70. At that time the French considered themselves justified in preventing Germany from attaining her unity because France saw in it a menace to the leading position which up to that time she had enjoyed on the Continent. In exactly the same way the refusal to be bound by treaty to remain at the mercy of England is looked upon in London to-day as an unfriendly act and a menace to peace.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## BALKAN AFFAIRS.

No. 58.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, April 1, 1909.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

More than one point still remains to be settled before the Balkan crisis is actually closed. The Turkish Parliament has not yet approved of the arrangement between Austria-Hungary and Turkey.<sup>9</sup> The very interesting report of Baron Beyens of March 13, which you have

communicated to me, apprises me of the fact that the Prince of Bulgaria is becoming impatient and threatens to march on Constantinople if the negotiations between his Government and Turkey do not proceed more rapidly. Further, there remains the question of the Conference, in regard to which two reefs must be avoided. To call a European Congress for the sole purpose of registering decisions already taken, *ne varietur*, would be somewhat ridiculous. If, on the other hand, any inclination were shown at the Conference to modify these decisions, then we should be steering straight for war.

Although the Balkan imbroglio has been more than incompetently handled by European diplomacy, and although it has been fertile in sudden changes and surprises, yet it is universally held that with Serbia's *démarche* in Vienna yesterday, it is as good as at an end.

The Serbian Government recognises that the annexation of Bosnia does not encroach upon her rights. She promises to refrain from any further protest, to put her army on a peace footing, to disband her volunteers, and to do her best to live in harmony with Austria-Hungary. Vienna had agreed to declare itself satisfied with this declaration, the wording of which had been determined upon in consultation with Baron Aehrenthal. If there existed no *arrière-pensée*, everyone should have been equally satisfied with it, since it is at the urgent and unanimous advice of the Powers that the Serbian Government has taken the step which it has. The *Paris Temps*, the relationship of which to the Quai d'Orsay is universally known, expresses itself meanwhile in such a manner as to suggest that a certain disappointment exists that St. Petersburg and Belgrade followed France's advice too readily. As always, when everything does not go as the French, English, or Russian politicians want it to, the *Times* shows its bad temper. Germany is the scapegoat.

In my opinion there is no doubt that Russia and France were inspired by a sincere desire to avoid a European conflagration. Russia has not the wherewithal to make war, and as long as her English friends are not in a position to come to her help on the Continent, France is far from feeling certain of success.<sup>10</sup>

But much as one longs for peace, one would have preferred to see it guaranteed differently to the way in which it has been. The Conference scheme elaborated

by M. Isvolsky<sup>11</sup> and Sir Edward Grey; the negotiations as to collective representations in Vienna, and the whole exchange of ideas between London, Paris and St. Petersburg were steadily aimed at forcing Austria-Hungary into a transaction which would strongly have resembled a humiliation. This humiliation would have affected Germany as directly and as sensibly as Austria-Hungary, and would have struck a heavy blow at the confidence which is inspired in Vienna by the alliance with Germany. These machinations were frustrated by Germany's absolutely unequivocal and decided attitude, from which she has never departed in spite of all the urgings with which she has been harassed. Germany alone has accomplished the preservation of peace.<sup>12</sup> The new grouping of the Powers organised by the King of England has measured its forces with the alliance of the Central European Powers, and has shown itself incapable of impairing the same. Hence the vexation which is manifested.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## ITALY AND THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE.

No. 59.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, April 17, 1909.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

A few days ago the *Koelnische Zeitung* published a short semi-official article to the effect that it was inaccurate that in the recent interview between Prince Bülow and M. Tittoni at Venice the question of the anticipated renewal of the Triple Alliance was spoken of. This was not necessary. The telegram adds that the result of the interview was to the highest degree satisfactory.

I did not write to you about it because such communications signify nothing. They are the necessary result of every meeting between Sovereigns or leading statesmen.

In point of fact Prince Bülow reported on the interview in a telegram of a few lines. The substance of it is that Italy, having obtained what she demanded in the

Balkan affair, through the suppression of article 29 of the Treaty of Berlin, there was nothing to discuss, and that the conversation was limited to general subjects, without touching upon particular points.

For a very long time neither Berlin nor Vienna have had any illusions whatever on the subject of the eventual assistance of Italy. The Quirinal has contracted engagements with France and England, and flirts continually with London and Paris. In spite of that Italy holds on to the Triple Alliance as a guarantee for the fidelity of her new friends, who only inspire her with a limited confidence. She reserves for herself an opening to incline towards the stronger side, as at Algeciras, when she supported France and England, and as recently in the Eastern question, when she finally united with Germany and Austria-Hungary, having taken up an equivocal attitude until the moment when it was possible to see which side would come out on top.

Germany and Austria-Hungary keep or tolerate Italy in the Triple Alliance because her official defection would signify a diminution of prestige, and also because by keeping her in there is a chance of not having her as an enemy in the event of a war; but that is all that is expected from it.

On the other hand, Germany would not commit herself so deeply for Italy as she has just done for Austria-Hungary; neither Vienna nor Berlin would compromise themselves on behalf of such a doubtful ally.<sup>13</sup>

I am, Sir, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## RUSSO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 60.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, June 31, 1909.

SIR,

The day before yesterday the German Emperor returned to Potsdam after his visit to the Emperor of Russia.<sup>14</sup>

The toasts exchanged on board the *Standart* were what they had necessarily to be. The two Sovereigns

expressed the intention of maintaining the traditionally friendly and confidential relations which exist between their two houses, and which are a pledge for the good relations between the two countries as well as for the preservation of peace.

The official notice which was published in No. 142 of the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of yesterday morning scarcely deviates from what is usual in such cases. It says that the statesmen who accompanied the two Emperors naturally conversed on pending political questions. It was ascertained that no contradiction exists in the manner in which these questions are considered in both countries. It was further recognised that the existing international arrangements, in which Russia and Germany take part, in no way hinder these good relations.

It is thus that the Triple Alliance has always been understood in Berlin. It was concluded for a purely defensive object. According to the official declaration, St. Petersburg, at least for the present, desires to interpret the arrangements which established the Triple Entente in the same sense, but it is certainly not in the same spirit that the last named grouping of the Powers was conceived in Paris, and particularly in London, by its principal author, the King of England. The ill-humour manifested in France and England as soon as the projected meeting [between the Kaiser and the Tsar] became known is proof that these two countries looked upon the Triple Entente as something quite different from a League which put no obstacles in the way of the maintenance of the traditional friendship and confidence between Germany and Russia. To judge by the language of the official French newspapers, the ill-humour [of Paris at the meeting] was promptly dissipated by the simultaneous declarations of the Cabinets of Berlin and St. Petersburg that the meeting of the two Emperors on the coast of Finland was inspired on neither side by the desire to change anything in the present grouping of the Powers.

In London resentment is more deep-seated, as is shown by the discourteous manner in which the approaching visit of the Emperor of Russia to England has been spoken of in the English papers, and even in Parliament. It is the result of the disappointment felt on seeing that the machine constructed by the King of

England for the purpose of exercising pressure, if not more, on Germany failed at the moment when it was desired to make use of it in the matter of the Austro-Serbian conflict, that is to say, at the first trial.

As I had the honour to inform you in my report of June 7, no illusions were entertained here as to the possible results of the meeting [of the two Emperors]. The initiative taken by the Russian Court and Government simply shows that certain recent events have left the impression in St. Petersburg that the Triple Entente does not furnish Russia with sufficient support to enable her to abandon at least normal relations with Germany.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE FRANCO-RUSSIAN ALLIANCE.

No. 61.

COUNT D'ARSHOT SCHOONHOVEN, Belgian *Chargé d'Affaires* in Paris, to M. DAVIGNON, Foreign Minister.

PARIS, August 3, 1909.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

As pre-arranged a long while ago, the President of the Republic met the Emperor of Russia at Cherbourg on July 31 last.

If one recalls the time of the first journey of the Tsar to Paris, the visits of Felix Faure to St. Petersburg and of Admiral Avelane to France, one cannot help being astonished at the small amount of sensation created in the country by the meeting of the two heads of States. The newspapers write it up, no doubt, but not more than they would any other event, and there is really nothing left of the delirious enthusiasm which shook the whole of France in the glorious days of the Russian Alliance.

Two great factors have brought about this change in public opinion: the war with Japan, which showed that one must not count too much on one's friends, and the repeated loans. M. Caillaux, however, told me quite recently that there are far fewer Russian securities in France than is generally supposed.

*Le Temps*, in its issue of the 2nd of this month, wrote apropos of the toasts pronounced at Cherbourg, the official

text of which you will find enclosed, that they constituted a new strengthening of the Alliance, to which the two Governments and the two nations remain firmly attached, and it added, "our alliance is as close to-day as it was yesterday."

The Alliance, it is true, is referred to, but it would almost seem as if some event were needed to recall its existence; and when its existence is recalled it is spoken of as you would speak of a pleasant fact, but not as one upon which much hope would be based in the event of need.

While the more serious part of the Press remains fairly reserved in its comments, the advanced portion has, as usual, published articles in sufficiently bad taste. You can judge of this by those I am transmitting to you.

The "Unified Socialists" desired to arrange a demonstration at Cherbourg, but the "Independent Socialist" minded municipality took measures to prevent any hall from being put at their disposal. These measures caused a string of protests; there was also no lack of criticism on the subject of the absence of M. Briand from the suite of M. Fallières. The Prime Minister was doubtless glad not to have to accompany the President of the Republic, but his personal opinions had nothing to do with the matter. He acted in conformity with official usage, according to which the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, of War and of the Navy alone accompany the head of State on such occasions.

The Tsar left Cherbourg yesterday morning.

I am, Sir, etc.,

(Signed) ARSCHOT.

## EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES TO TEXT.

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<sup>1</sup> A specimen of the incessant declaration to the same effect made between 1907 and the occupation of the capital of Morocco by 30,000 French troops in May, 1911.

<sup>2</sup> One of the most fertile and strategically important of the Morocco districts, of which Casablanca was the chief port—the “granary” of Morocco.

<sup>3</sup> Compare with Miss M. E. Durham’s remarks published many years later: “But that this arming of Serbia was directly connected with the ringing-in policy of France and Russia is now obvious. Poor Edward VII. may have thought he was peace-making . . . but he little knew the Balkans.” (“Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle,” 1920.)

<sup>4</sup> The “delicacy” of Germany’s position referred to here was her desire and obligation to support her ally, Austria, without bringing about a breach with Russia. The British Government took up a very violent attitude towards Austria over the Bosnian annexation. Our foreign policy was by this time revolving more and more within the Russian orbit. The reference to the Congo is obscure. (See “Pre-War Diplomacy,” by E. D. Morel, for details of the annexation of Bosnia.)

<sup>5</sup> The constant play upon the words “aggression” and “defence” is at once the stock-in-trade of diplomacy; the measure of the insanity of the whole system of international relationships and the method by which the *Peoples* are everywhere induced to support preparations for war. In Britain the creation of the territorial army was described as a measure of defence: in Germany it was regarded as a measure for aggressive purposes. In Britain, Germany’s army was described as aggressive in purpose: in Germany, as defensive. We style the expenditure on our land and sea forces as “defensive.” Every other country does the same, either explicitly or implicitly. Yet Britain has fought more wars in the last 200 years than any other European State.

<sup>6</sup> No Conference was held. Austria compensated Turkey pecuniarily, and Serbia climbed down on the assurance of the Tsar that she had merely to bide her time and arm. (See “Pre-War Diplomacy,” containing an analysis of the documents unearthed by the Soviet Government from the secret archives of Tsardom.)

<sup>7</sup> One day before this despatch was written, Sir John Fisher, our First Sea Lord, wrote to Lord Esher: “The unswerving intention of four years has now culminated in two complete fleets in home waters, each of which is incomparably superior to the whole German Fleet mobilised for war. Don’t take my word! Count them, see them for yourselves! You *will* see them next June. This

can't alter for years, even were we supinely passive in our building; but it won't alter because we will have eight Dreadnoughts a year—*so sleep quiet in your beds!* The Germans are not building in this feverish haste to fight you. NO! it's the daily dread they have of a second Copenhagen, which they know a Pitt or a Bismarck would execute on them! 'Cease building or I strike.'"

On August 3 he wrote to Lord Esher: "All has gone most splendidly in all ways, and the King is enormously gratified at the magnificent show of the Fleet to put before the Emperor of Russia. I told the Emperor it was a fine avenue!—18 miles of ships—the most powerful in the world, and none of them more than ten years old." ("Memories.")

<sup>8</sup> See note 7.

<sup>9</sup> It subsequently did. It could hardly have done anything else. Moreover, Turkish suzerainty over Bosnia and Herzegovina had long been purely nominal. It is historically interesting to recall that Lord Salisbury took the leading part, at the Berlin Conference of 1878, in urging an Austrian occupation of these Turkish provinces.

<sup>10</sup> Russia was not ready for war at this juncture, and made frantic efforts to damp down Serbia's bellicosity. Paschitsch, the Serbian Minister, was received in special audience by the Tsar on November 12, 1908, and reports him as saying: "The Bosnia-Herzegovina question will be decided by war alone. . . . Our line of conduct should be: an understanding with Turkey, a calm attitude, military preparation and watchful waiting." (See "Causes of the War," by M. Bogitchevitch: George Allen and Unwin.) France was extremely unwilling at this moment to allow herself to be committed too deeply in Russia's Balkan schemes.

<sup>11</sup> See note 6.

<sup>12</sup> This, of course, is one way of putting it. It is true in the sense that Germany's "unequivocal" assurance to Russia that she would support her ally Austria (if Russia supported Serbia to the extent of declaring war upon Austria), compelled Russia to accept the accomplished fact of the Austrian annexation of Bosnia.

<sup>13</sup> Italy had by this time ceased to count as a member of the Triple Alliance, although the Alliance had been formally renewed in 1908, and was again in 1912. When the Alliance was originally entered into it was stipulated that it did not apply to a possible collision with Great Britain, and in 1897, when it was renewed for the second time, Italy made it clear that, should Great Britain enter into an alliance with France, Italy's *non sequitur* must apply to France also. Thus, although the Alliance was originally sought by Mancini as a defence against France, the Triple Alliance became as from that date, 1897, so far as Italy was concerned, an Alliance strictly limited to Italy's own aspirations. Neither Germany nor Austria could have given her any assistance in the defence of her long coast-line, and she would have been powerless against an Anglo-French combined naval attack.

<sup>14</sup> This visit was an effort to patch up the effect of Germany's support of Austria in the affair of the Bosnian annexation.

## PART VI.

[1910—1911.]

Russia and Germany—The Second Morocco Crisis—  
Germany's Attitude—The French March on Fez—  
The German Reply—The British Government's  
Attitude—On the Brink of War.

## PART VI.

### Chronology of Principal Events in 1910-1911.

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- Russia facilitates the escape of the deposed Shah of Persia. *1910.  
January.*
- Increasing chaos in Morocco through French action.....*All the  
year.*
- Keen competition between the representatives of Britain, France, Russia and Germany and Austria to secure the friendship of the "Young Turks." .....*All the year.*
- Reckless naval scare speeches by Mr. Balfour .....*All the year.*
- Russia begins to influence the formation of a Balkan League. *March.*
- Death of King Edward VII. ....*May 6.*
- Mr. Asquith, speaking of Anglo-German relations in the House, declares: "I can say with most perfect sincerity that our relations with Germany have been, and at this moment are, of the most cordial character. I look forward to increasing warmth and fervour and intimacy in these relations year by year." .....*July.*
- Mr. Winston Churchill speaks with Mr. Wilfred Scawen Blunt of the "coming war with Germany." .....*October.*
- The British Government, acting in concert with the Russian Government, prevents Persia contracting a private loan on the London market .....*October.*
- The British Government delivers an ultimatum to Persia demanding the policing of the Southern roads by British officers. *October.*
- Russo-German Potsdam agreement .....*November.*
- The *Times* announces a £20,000,000 loan for an Anglo-Russian railway through Persia to Beluchistan .....*November.*
- King Peter of Serbia visits Rome .....*1911.  
February.*
- Growth of the movement in favour of a Balkan League under the *agis* of Russia .....*All the year.*
- British opposition to Bagdad railway decreases .....*March.*
- Fez, capital of Morocco, reported blocked by insurgents, and Europeans in peril (this untrue) .....*April.*
- Visit of the German Emperor and Empress to London .....*May.*
- The French Government orders a military march on Fez ...*May.*
- The German Government informs France that, as the Algeiras Act, which guaranteed the independence and integrity of Morocco,

has gone by the board, Germany reserves to herself complete liberty of action .....*May.*

Fez "relieved." French troops remain in occupation ...*June.*

Spain pours troops into Morocco .....*June.*

Morocco occupied by 100,000 French and Spanish troops...*June.*

Germany sends gun-boat "Panther" to Agadir .....*July.*

Acute Anglo-German friction: provocative speech by Mr. Lloyd George at the Mansion House: stormy interview between Sir E. Grey and the German Ambassador .....*July.*

Paris money markets closed against Austro-Hungarian investments and loans .....*August.*

Italian Ultimatum to Turkey over Tripoli .....*September.*

Italy declares war on Turkey .....*September.*

(The *Daily News* editorial of September 30 says: "Thus opens the first war which French action in Morocco has launched upon Europe; the first, but who knows whether it will be the last?")

Serbian *Chargé d'Affaires* in London reports to his Government an alleged statement by M. Cambon, the French Ambassador, that war with Germany "must be postponed to a later time, that is to say, until the year 1914-15." .....*September.*

Continued interference in Persia by Russia .....*Sept. to Oct.*

Italian fleet bombards Tripoli and Benghazi .....*October.*

Great massacre of Arabs by Italians in the Tripoli oasis.

*October.*

Franco-German Agreement over Morocco signed .....*November.*

Publication in French newspapers of the Secret Clauses to the Anglo-French Convention of April, 1904, and of the Secret Franco-Spanish Convention of October, 1904, arranging for a Franco-Spanish partition of Morocco .....*November.*

Russian "Ultimatum" to Persia demanding the dismissal of Mr. Morgan Shuster, the American Treasurer of the Persian Government: Persia refuses .....*November.*

Mr. Asquith states in the House: "There is no secret arrangement of any sort or kind which has not been disclosed, and fully disclosed, to the public . . ." .....*November.*

Mr. Asquith states in the House: "As has been stated . . . there are no secret engagements with any foreign Government that entail upon us any obligation to render military or naval assistance to any other Power." .....*December.*

First steps towards Anglo-German "conversations" *Nov.-Dec.*

Massacre of Persians by Russian troops at Tabriz...*December.*

The Russian Ambassador at Constantinople raises the question of the passage of Russian warships through the Dardanelles, and is disavowed by his Government .....*December.*

Sir John French, with his staff, visits headquarters of French Army .....*December.*

DESPATCHES FROM THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN  
PARIS, THE NEW BELGIAN MINISTER IN PARIS,  
THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN BERLIN, THE  
BELGIAN MINISTER IN LONDON, AND THE  
BELGIAN *CHARGE D'AFFAIRES* IN PARIS.

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## RUSSO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 62.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, November 7, 1910.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

You will have noticed the inspired articles in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* through which it made known to the public that the recent visit paid by the Emperor of Russia to the Emperor of Germany in Potsdam is more than a simple *démarche* of courtesy.<sup>1</sup> The *Rossija*, the organ of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, wrote at the same time that the meeting of the two sovereigns is of great political significance. The *Vienna Fremdenblatt* expressed itself in the same sense. The first two official papers declared that there was no question of introducing innovations in the political system of Europe, which were desired neither in Germany nor in Russia. All three were unanimous in expressing the hope that the exchange of views between the Sovereigns and their Ministers would help to dissipate the misunderstandings which necessarily arise between neighbouring States who have parallel but reconcilable interests, and whose rivalry is without influence on general politics. Apart from official comments, the character of the Tsar's visit was further punctuated by the fact that his Majesty had summoned his new Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Sazonov, to Essen, and the latter had accompanied him on his short visit to Potsdam. M. Sazonov was received by the Emperor and by the Chancellor, as well

as by Herr Kiderlen-Waechter.<sup>2</sup> There can have been no lack of subjects of conversation. What is happening in Persia and the Far East is of such a nature as to awaken in Germany the fear that events, the political side of which might leave the Empire indifferent, will result in the closing of these countries to German trade. Russia has always looked unfavourably upon the German plan of a railway in Mesopotamia. Although Germany follows the principle of not mixing herself up in the political questions of the Balkan Peninsula, yet it is impossible that Berlin as well as St. Petersburg should not be troubled by the disorders of Greece,<sup>3</sup> the fact that the protecting Powers cannot find a solution to the question of Crete, the unrest in Macedonia, and the ambitions of the Tsar of Bulgaria.<sup>4</sup> But all these problems are very complicated, and it cannot be supposed that a solution of them was arrived at in the short space of two days, most of which was taken up in official ceremonies and banquets. It was hardly long enough for the exchange of assurances of goodwill, naturally conceived in vague terms and whose practical value is doubtful. More important than the conversations between the statesmen is the fact that the visit itself took place.

During the first three-quarters of the 19th century, the union between Russia and Prussia was a constant and certain factor of European politics. It was based not only upon the common interests of the two nations, but also upon the close friendship of the two reigning houses, cemented by the ties of kinship.<sup>5</sup> It was thus especially in the days of the Emperor Nicolas I. The first blow was struck at the relationship by the Congress of Berlin, when Prince Bismarck tried to bring Russia and England together, and when he shared the fate of all mediators, that is, of being accused by both adversaries of showing partiality towards the other. The Russian people, thinking itself defrauded of the fruits of its victories through the fault of Germany, conceived for its western neighbour a hatred which was intensified through jealousy, called forth by the rapid development of German power. In the union between Russia and Prussia the former played a rather subordinate part. An uncomfortable impression was left upon St. Petersburg, and particularly in Moscow, when Berlin became the chief centre of European politics. The further steps

in the progressive coolness in the relationship between the two countries were marked by the alliance of Russia with France, the establishment of the Triple Entente, and, lastly, Germany's intervention in the question of the Bosnian annexation. It is denied here (Berlin) that any pressure was exercised on Russia. This is merely playing with words. Without Prince Bülow's declaration on the solidarity of Germany and Austria-Hungary, and without Count Pourtales' warning in St. Petersburg,<sup>6</sup> Russia would not quite suddenly have given up her agitation against Austria-Hungary in the little Slav States, and particularly in Belgrade. The solution of the Bosnian question was for Russia a humiliation as well as a disappointment. Her prestige had to suffer in withdrawing, at a request from foreign countries, the protection which she granted to Serbian covetousness. The experience showed her the inefficiency of the Coalition formed by the late King of England the first time that it was put to the test.

If the antipathy of the Russian and German peoples has not had graver consequences, it is due to the fact that the relationship between the Sovereigns, although altered, has always been better than that existing between the peoples, and even between the Governments.<sup>7</sup> It seems as though it were painful to the two reigning houses to break with an old tradition, and the step taken by Tsar Nicolas appears to indicate that he wishes to resume it. It was he that expressed a desire to meet the German Emperor, a wish that was at first received with little enthusiasm in Berlin. The moment chosen was the one when the ground had been cleared by the resignation of M. Isvolsky.<sup>8</sup> The personal animosity between the former Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Count Aehrenthal was one of the chief obstacles that had to be overcome in order to arrive at a pacific solution of the Bosnian question. I have also reason to believe that M. Isvolsky inspired very little confidence in Berlin; M. Sazonov, on the contrary, made a very good impression on the Emperor, the Chancellor, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

The visit to Potsdam is, therefore, a matter for satisfaction, and is of a nature to improve the relationship between the two Empires, and, perhaps also as a result of that, the relationship between Vienna and St. Petersburg, but it is an exaggeration to attribute to it, as

the *Rossija* does, a high political significance. The grouping of the big European Powers will remain as it was before, and the feelings of the Russian people for Germany will not become more cordial on account of it. The language of the Russian newspapers already shows this.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

[There is a break in the despatches from November, 1910, to March, 1911.]

### DELCASSÉ'S NOMINATION TO CABINET RANK.

No. 63.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *March 3, 1911.*

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

As was to be expected, M. Delcassé's nomination as Minister for the Navy was received badly here, the more so as M. Berteaux holds the Portfolio for War in the new Cabinet formed under great difficulties by M. Monis. It is unlikely that the Imperial Government will publish or at any rate allow the impression made upon it to become known, in order to avoid all appearance of intervention in France's internal affairs. But its feelings obviously do not differ from that of the Press. As I wrote to Baron de Favereau, at the time of M. Delcassé's resignation in 1905, Baron de Richthoven told me that for years the former French Minister of Foreign Affairs had treated Germany as a "negligible quantity." According to opinion here, M. Delcassé's long spell of office was looked upon as having created a very grave situation—not without reason, considering that the first time he spoke after his fall it was to boast of having organised an aggressive league against Germany.<sup>9</sup>

However, Delcassé's return to power is not taken over tragically here. It is no longer the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that is confided to him. Neither has he King Edward, whose colleague he believed himself to be, and whose instrument he was, at his side. The Potsdam meeting has diminished French confidence in the Russian

Alliance, because in Paris and in London they persist in attributing to it an importance which it does not possess. Lastly, the Monis Ministry has been so badly greeted in France itself that in all probability it will be of short duration.

One may add that no change of persons can lead to a serious alteration in the relations between Germany and France. As a matter of fact, they will remain for a very long time guided by the feelings of the two peoples. If they appear outwardly to differ, it will be in accordance with the courtesy, or otherwise, which official forms observe. M. Pichon has never departed from a perfectly "correct" attitude towards Germany. The words which the Emperor addressed to me on February 1, and which I reported to you the next day, show sufficiently clearly what was thought here of the true sentiments of the former French Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Although there is no occasion for immoderate alarm over the composition of the new French Ministry, yet to allege that it is lacking in significance from the point of view of foreign politics would be to fall into the opposite extreme.

M. Delcassé, it is true, has officially nothing to do with it (foreign policy), but he is far too ambitious and restless a man not to try and impress his ideas upon his colleagues. He would almost seem to have been invited to do so, since, according to the *Agence Havas*,<sup>10</sup> M. Monis is supposed to have asked him to come to an understanding with M. Berteaux on the choice of the other members of the Ministry.

Public opinion in France also seems to be inclining towards a more active foreign policy. Only a short time ago, M. Pichon, who has undoubtedly some real successes to his credit, was extremely popular. Now he has ceased to be so. He is criticised over the result of the Potsdam meeting, which he had not the means of preventing, and which, moreover, ought not to alarm anyone if, as is maintained, the Triple Entente's only object is the preservation of peace. As nothing has been changed in the grouping of the great Powers, a *rapprochement* which improves the relations between Germany and Russia should be welcomed. But Paris and London would prefer them to be bad.

Quite recently, when handing the "Peace Prize" to M. d'Estournelles de Constant, on such a solemn occa-

sion, and before a numerous audience, the President of the French Senate spoke more openly of "Revanche" than has been done for years.

The French Press warmly applauded the policy followed in the matter of the Flushing fortifications.<sup>11</sup> M. Pichon is not blamed for having somewhat heedlessly let himself in for this adventure, but only for having failed.

The French papers daily find some cause or other for complaint against Germany. One is accustomed to this, but recently the movement has doubled in intensity.

It would seem as though M. Delcassé had been called to office to play up to this state of public opinion. True, he is not appointed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. That would have been a provocation—but as much as possible has been done, without actually smashing the window panes (*casser les vitres*).

I ask myself if France is not speculating on Germany's internal difficulties. These unfortunately are still the same as I depicted them to you in my report of October 1. The Parties are badly led and separated, less by divergence of opinion than by bitterness and hatred. The Government is without influence upon the Reichstag, which only recently inflicted a sharp defeat upon it in the matter of the constitution of Alsace and Lorraine. But to believe that the Empire is weakened outwardly by this would be a dangerous delusion. The ease with which the new military *quinquennat* and the naval budget were passed is a proof to the contrary. The Reichstag, divided on every other point, unanimously adopted them practically without discussion, with the exception of the Social Democrats. Even the latter are obliged to mitigate their opposition by declaring that in the event of war they would do their duty as every other German. And yet the taxes are very heavy and it is a crushing burden for Germany to maintain at the same time a first-class Army and a first-class Navy.

This fact has not been sufficiently appreciated in other countries. The lesson should be drawn from it that in case of peril from outside things would happen exactly as in 1870. At that time the discord was greater than it is to-day. On the day of the declaration of war, it disappeared as though it had never existed.

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE FOREIGN LEGION.

No. 64.

BARON GUILLAUME,<sup>12</sup> Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, March 4, 1911.

SIR,

You will have noticed the reception which the German Press has given to the new French Ministry, and the persistence with which it maintains that M. Delcassé's personality is too pronounced not to exercise a dominating influence upon the Ministry which he has consented to enter. M. Cruppi<sup>13</sup> is dismissed from consideration; M. Delcassé will guide the foreign policy of the Republic, and the circumstances under which he but lately had to give up office were not forgotten.

Much prudence will have to be observed here towards Germany, to which I certainly do not attribute any bellicose intentions nor any war-like *arrière-pensée*, but which is sure to hold herself politically on the defensive. The incident in connection with the Foreign Legion,<sup>14</sup> the development of which you will have followed in the Press of the two countries, should be watched. The German Minister of War expressed himself fairly clearly upon the subject of this corps of mercenaries; German newspapers laid particular stress upon the criticisms which are brought against the recruiting and the treatment of the legionaries, and the feelings of the French Press have been aroused; for some days the bitterness of its language has increased. Jingoism enters into its comments. Military authorities and former commanders of the Foreign Legion are interviewed, and the note just published in the *Cologne Gazette* is hardly conducive to calming the excitement.

I do not believe that this excitement has sunk very deep in France, nor that public opinion, in the true sense of the word, is touched by it; but the Press is working up jingoism, and might use unfortunate words which would aggravate the situation.

It is to be hoped that nothing of the sort will happen, but undoubtedly the question may become more acute, and if Germany wishes to, she can keep it open until the day when she wants to find an excuse for a misunderstanding.

I also hear that a regular propaganda is carried on in Germany, along the French frontier, to promote desertion from the German Army into the French Foreign Legion.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## THE BRITISH NAVAL DEBATE.

No. 65.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, March 20, 1911.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

The speech on foreign politics delivered by Sir Edward Grey a week ago on the occasion of the debate on the Naval Budget, provoked numerous comments in the English Press, and in the Press of other countries, with the exception of Germany. The *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* expressed the satisfaction of the Imperial Government. As a highly-official organ it was obliged to do so. Silence would, with good reason, have been considered in London as an insult. But the other papers limited themselves simply to reproducing the contents of the speech as transmitted by the telegraphic agencies, or only adding short and insignificant reflections. Yet is it here; of all places, that the words of the British Foreign Minister should have caused the greatest sensation and have produced the most agreeable impression, if one could confidently believe that they really entirely reflected the ideas of the English Government.<sup>15</sup> They would mark a notable change in the policy inaugurated not long ago by the Unionist cabinet, and whose traditions were continued by the subsequent Liberal Government. Such a development would not signify an alteration in the present grouping of the Great Powers; but it would imply that England no longer wishes to give to the Triple Entente the aggressive character which was stamped upon it by its creator, King Edward VII. To judge by the indifference of the German public, one would be inclined to think that it has become dulled by the innumerable meetings and mutual demonstrations of courtesy which have never produced any positive result, and that it wants to guard against fresh disappointments. This distrust is comprehensible, considering that only

quite recently the English Government took part in the Flushing intrigue. We have the proof of it in the step which Sir A. Hardinge took in your direction in order to try and draw us (in Belgium) into it.<sup>16</sup>

Still, it is possible that in the present case this scepticism is a little uncalled for. A *rapprochement* with Russia and with England was part of the political program of Herr V. Kiderlen-Waechter when he accepted the direction of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The first part of this plan was realised in the Potsdam meeting. The conversations between Berlin and St. Petersburg have been interrupted since Sazonov's illness; before that, however, there was a very active change of ideas between the two Cabinets. No positive result has yet been reached, and perhaps nothing very concrete will be arrived at; but the relationship between the two countries has become normal again. It no longer bears the character of hostile reserve which it assumed after the annexation of Bosnia.

Circumstances lend themselves to the realisation of the Foreign Secretary's program. About five weeks ago the King of England wrote to the German Emperor to invite him to assist at the inauguration of the statue of Queen Victoria. This is the first letter King George has addressed to His Majesty since he mounted the throne. It was conceived in particularly cordial terms, which produced the most agreeable impression here. You will doubtless remember, sir, what the Imperial Chancellor said a few days after in his speech on foreign affairs in the Reichstag on the subject of the confidence he felt in the honesty of England's policy towards Germany. One may consider Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's attitude to be the result of the King of England's message.

Sir Edward Grey's speech was not confined to empty words as on former occasions—it was accompanied, or rather preceded, by an Act. For years the English Press had the unheard of arrogance to insist that Britain had the right to control, and even to forbid, the completion of the Bagdad railway; that is to say, Britain wanted to have the predominant voice in an enterprise which only concerns Turkey, the Concessionaire company, and (indirectly) the German Government which supported it. Sir Edward Grey has placed this question back once more upon its legal basis by recognising that England has

no legal right to interfere in an internal Turkish affair, and in announcing that she will limit herself to guaranteeing her interests by the legal means which are at her disposal.<sup>17</sup> On this basis an understanding can be arrived at. No one will deny the existence of British interests, or think of criticising the British Government for defending them.

At all events, the moment is propitious for an attempt to improve the relationship between Germany and England. There is, for the present, no irritating question on the *tapis* which would hinder it.

I beg to draw your attention to the fact, sir, that the present report does not mean that I consider an Anglo-German reconciliation as already accomplished or imminent. I should desire such a reconciliation with all my heart, because it would mean that Belgium's security was considerably increased.<sup>17</sup> All I wish to say is that in my opinion the German papers have not taken Sir Edward Grey's speech with sufficient seriousness, and that one must await events in order to be able to judge of its real import. The disappointment shown by *Le Temps* proves that public opinion in Paris attaches much more importance to it than in Berlin. To judge by the manner in which the French paper expresses itself, one would say that it no longer considers the Triple Entente as anything but an empty formula devoid of significance.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## FRANCE AND THE ALGECIRAS ACT.

No. 66.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, April 21, 1911.

SIR,

Some days ago the French Press circulated a rumour to the effect that France had received the assurance that she would meet with no hindrance from Germany in the measures which it would be necessary to take in order to solve the existing crisis in Morocco. One gave oneself up to conjectures as to the compensations which had been, or were in a position to be granted to the Imperial Govern-

ment in exchange for the liberty of action guaranteed to the French Government. We are still far from such a consummation. The truth is that since the situation of the Sultan, Mulai Hafid, became critical, the French Ambassador in Berlin has had several conversations with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that he further went to Paris to report upon the steps he had taken and that he continued them on his return to Berlin.<sup>18</sup> M. Cambon spoke of the necessity by which France might find herself confronted to come to the Sultan's assistance with armed support. Only the day before yesterday he reminded the Chancellor of the bitter reproaches made at the time against Mr. Gladstone, because he allowed Gordon Pasha and the other Europeans besieged in Khartoum: by the Mahdi to be massacred, without trying to come to their aid. The French Ambassador's attention was drawn to the fact, on the German side, that the Imperial Government was forced to keep account of public opinion in Germany.

Everything is, therefore, still in a state of uncertainty which visibly troubles the French Ambassador, and which explains the hesitation and evasions of the French Government, as well as the contradictory articles which succeed each other in the French papers. One day we are told that the Sultan, Mulai Hafid, is at the end of his resources, the next day we are assured that his position has improved, although no notable change has taken place.

I do not believe that the least desire is felt here to play an active part in the Moroccan affair. Every illusion, if ever entertained, on the value of the Algeciras Act, which France signed with the firm intention of never observing, must long since have vanished. She has not ceased for one moment to pursue her plans of annexation; either by seizing opportunities for provisional occupations, destined to last for ever; or by extorting concessions which have placed the Sultan in a position of dependence upon France, and which have gradually lowered him to the level of the Bey of Tunis.<sup>19</sup> When the Imperial Government bound itself by the agreement of February 9, 1909,<sup>20</sup> not to lay any obstacles in the way of France's political interests in Morocco, it doubtless knew that France would interpret this clause as an encouragement to persevere upon the same path, and would look upon the promise to respect the independence of Morocco as nothing but a

dead letter. To draw back now would be a cruel humiliation for France.

Germany has no reason to inflict such a humiliation upon France, and could not, moreover, after eight years of tolerance, change her attitude, unless she were determined to go to war. And war is immeasurably more than Morocco is worth.

Lastly, it cannot be displeasing to Berlin that France should be engaged in a colonial enterprise which will force her for a very long time to immobilise considerable forces in Africa and to turn her eyes from the lost provinces. That was the policy of Prince Bismarck. It was discarded eight years ago because the King of England and M. Delcassé had to be shown that Germany would not allow herself to be treated as a "negligible quantity," but there is no reason now why the former policy should not be resumed. But reserve does not depend solely upon the Imperial Government. It must be helped to maintain it from without. It is perfectly true that public opinion is excited. As I had the honour to inform you in my report of February 11, 1909,<sup>21</sup> the Agreement of February 9 was criticised by all the German papers that had no official connections. Since then the Imperial Government has more than once been blamed for showing too much indulgence towards France in the Morocco affair. The passage in M. Cruppi's programme-speech in the Senate in which the French Minister boasted, as did his predecessors, of a European mandate which no one has ever thought of conferring, was widely noted. France's promises no longer inspire any confidence. People cannot forget that the language of M. Pichon, which was always "correct," invariably contradicted his actions.<sup>22</sup> Why should M. Cruppi be more sincere than his predecessors? It is pointed out that all the Moroccan difficulties have been called forth by France's policy of conquest. The newspapers still obstinately refuse to see that the stipulations of the Algeciras Act were nothing but humbug and are ingenious enough to demand their execution.

If the French Government really has it at heart to remove the chances of a conflict, it is for that Government to behave now with a sufficient amount of prudence and feigned moderation not to force Germany to abandon her passive attitude.

I am, etc., (Signed) GREINDL.

## GROWING TROUBLE OVER MOROCCO.

No. 67.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *April 29, 1911*

SIR,

The telegraphic agencies keep you informed, more speedily than it would be possible for me to do, of the various occurrences which are at the present time making Morocco the primary subject of interest to the French Government. Whilst allowing for that national characteristic which makes Frenchmen always inclined to exaggerate the importance of all events which affect themselves and of all actions in which they are playing a part, still it cannot be denied that the state of affairs is at present very intricate in the region of Morocco. Faction and treachery are equally rife among all the tribes, and a heavy responsibility devolves upon the Power which has accepted—which has taken upon itself—the mission of re-establishing order in Morocco.

There are, so far, no grounds for fearing that the French expedition will bring about any disturbance of international policy.<sup>23</sup> Germany is a calm spectator of events. Possibly she is congratulating herself on the difficulties that weigh upon the shoulders of the French Government, and asks nothing better than to keep out of the whole affair so long as she is not forced into it by economic considerations.

England, having thrust France into the Moroccan bog, is contemplating her work with satisfaction. There only remains Spain, which naturally is not over well-pleased with the direction which France's movements are taking, and is painfully obliged to recognise that her means fall short of her aspirations, and that she must make the best of a bad job.<sup>24</sup>

I venture to call your attention to an article in to-day's *Temps*, which defines fairly accurately—with just a tinge of optimism—France and Spain's respective positions in relation to Morocco. I have reason to believe that it pretty well reflects the opinion, and certainly the wishes, of the Quai d'Orsay.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## GERMAN WARNING TO FRANCE.

No. 68.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, May 1, 1911.

SIR,

Since the Moroccan crisis has once more become acute, the inspired German Press has been confining itself to reporting the information received from the news agencies, abstaining from all comment. The silence was broken yesterday morning by a front-page article in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, of which the following is a translation :

During the whole of the past week, the anxiety of the French Government to take steps for the protection of the French officers residing in or near Fez has become more and more noticeable. According to such news as has reached Berlin, there is fortunately at present no cause for alarm as to the safety of the European settlements. No fault can be found with France for considering every means that she may believe suitable to protect the lives of her officers. It is, of course, for France to judge what she does consider suitable means, since it is she who will be responsible for the consequences of the means that she employs. The French Government has given binding promises that they merely intend to take such steps as are necessary to ensure the safety of French subjects, and, in particular, that France has no intention of infringing the integrity of Morocco nor the supremacy of the Sultan. Nor does she contemplate occupying Fez. It is to be hoped that events will allow of the French Government's adhering to its programme. Any departure from it would be out of keeping with the Act of Algeciras, since the independence of the ruler of Morocco forms an integral part of the Act. A contravention of any essential provisions of the Act of Algeciras, even if forced on by external circumstances and against the will of the Power so acting, would restore to all the Powers their liberty of action, and might thereby lead to consequences not now to be foreseen. We can but repeat, however, that, for the moment, there is no reason to forecast any such far-reaching developments in view of the prudence displayed hitherto by the French Government.

This inspired article confirms what I had the honour to tell you in my report of April 21 last. From this it appears that the Imperial Government finds that the alarmist rumours circulated by the Paris Press about the situation in Morocco are not in agreement with direct information received in Berlin, and considers that they have been, for reasons easily conceivable, very highly

exaggerated.<sup>25</sup> This scepticism is all the more justified since it is shared by the English newspapers, which certainly cannot be suspected of hostile sentiments towards France or any very tender affection for Germany.

Nevertheless, the Imperial Government has no desire to involve itself in extraneous difficulties by interfering with France's military proceedings in Morocco. In order to avoid any necessity for intervention it professes to attach credence to the assurances of the French Government as to the provisional character of the occupation of Moroccan territory. But all the same, people here have no reason to assume that M. Cruppi is any more sincere than M. Pichon was, and their belief in his sincerity must be diminished now that M. Delcassé is a member of the French Cabinet.

The conclusion of the inspired article is designed to soothe public opinion in Germany, which has been genuinely perturbed, and which for a long time past has been accusing the Imperial Government of shutting its eyes to the fact that the undertakings entered into by the Act of Algeciras, and the Convention of February 9, 1909, are being systematically ignored. What is the significance of this semi-official hint to the people in Paris? Does Herr von Kiderten-Waechter, who is much more energetic than his predecessors, wish them to understand that he will not tolerate any fresh encroachments by France? Or is his only object to gain time whilst avoiding any conflict with popular feeling? I am inclined towards the last hypothesis. As my colleague at Tangier very rightly points out in his report of April 15 last, France has already got control of the Customs, the public works, the functioning of the Morocco loan, and the telegraphs. She occupies important districts of Morocco on the East and on the West. She has compelled the Sultan to contract a debt to France on which he is unable to pay the interest. The number of French instructors is so out of proportion to the effectives of the tiny standing army of Morocco that they are practically its masters. The foreign policy of Morocco is dictated from Paris. What remains to be preserved? For the Sultan to recover the position of an independent sovereign, a (European) war would be necessary; and that would be a price out of all proportion to the value of Morocco.

The Spanish Ambassador at Berlin is making himself very active and taking many steps in connection with

Morocco: but he does not tell his colleagues what end he has in view. No doubt it is obvious at Madrid that Spain was tricked by France and England in 1904, and they are seeking support in Berlin.<sup>26</sup> It is very unlikely that they will find it there. Being anxious for her own sake to avoid action Germany has no reason to commit herself for the sake of Spain, whose behaviour at Algeciras was not of a sort to inspire her with gratitude.

The situation remains precarious despite the attitude indicated by the inspired article. The slightest lack of tact might force Germany to abandon her passive rôle. A great deal, too, depends on the Press. Some of the French newspapers point out much too undisguisedly that Morocco is to be turned into another Tunis. The German Press is for the most part very reticent in tone; but those papers which are the mouthpiece of the pan-Germans put forward claims that must be exceedingly embarrassing for the policy of the Imperial Government.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## ATTITUDE OF THE BRITISH CABINET.

No. 69.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *May 9, 1911.*

SIR,

If the progress of the French campaign in Morocco is being attentively watched in London, it is because public-opinion feels some alarm as to its possible effects upon European politics. There is apparently a fear lest France should commit some imprudence that might give Germany an excuse for protesting.

Of course people are far from believing that the Imperial Government wants war. They are convinced that the Emperor does not wish it; but they are wondering whether the Berlin Cabinet might not, under certain circumstances, be tempted to assert itself by some protest, and thus make a striking demonstration of its power, which would be humiliating to France and unpleasant for England and Russia. By parading its preponderating weight in the councils of Europe, the German

Government would justify itself against the Opposition it has to face in the German Parliament, as to the expediency of maintaining a huge military and naval force, with whose cost it is being continually criticised in the Reichstag. Any occupation of Fez which should, for instance, assume too permanent an aspect, or any failure to keep the spirit, if not the actual letter, of the engagements entered into at Algeciras, might give Berlin an opportunity to intervene.

The French Ambassador in London is constantly having long interviews at the Foreign Office, in which he is said to lay great stress on France's preponderant rights in Morocco as contrasted with the comparatively insignificant claims of Spain.

Some jingo organs of the London Press maintain that Great Britain ought to give vigorous support to the French Cabinet, should the German Government show any signs of bringing pressure to bear. This attitude does not seem a likely one to be adopted by so pacific a Government as Mr. Asquith's.

When replying quite recently to a question in the House of Commons as to the French movements in Morocco, Sir Edward Grey confined himself to saying, that the decision of the French Government as to the dispatch of troops to Fez had been communicated to the English Government merely verbally, that the *Mehallah*<sup>27</sup> had been sent to Fez at the express request of the Sultan; and that as to France's rights of intervention, he referred the speaker to the Act of Algeciras and the Anglo-French agreement of 1904.<sup>28</sup>

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## PREPARING FOR THE MARCH ON FEZ.

No. 70.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, May 10, 1911.

SIR,

You will have read in some of the papers the report circulated by a recently formed news agency, that the German Imperial Government has decided to send three

cruisers to Moroccan waters. You will also have read the undoubtedly official contradiction of this report in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, speaking of it as a "dangerous impropriety," and saying that "anyone still capable of grasping a political idea must be aware of the responsibility he incurs in launching a purely fictitious piece of sensational news about a matter so serious as the Moroccan question."

There is a striking contrast between the tone of this *communiqué* and of the one that I had the honour to transmit to you in my report of May 1, which said in effect that the prudence manifested by the French Government made it possible to believe that the Morocco question would not take such a turn as would oblige Germany to consider the Treaty of Algeciras as not existent, and to resume her liberty of action. The situation has, in fact, not improved during the last ten days. Quite the contrary. There is contradiction between the reports which emanate from French sources and those of German origin; the former depict the peril<sup>29</sup> as being as great as ever, whilst the latter deny its existence. Although the town of Fez is no longer invested, and the French officers can leave it when they please, military preparations continue; and since a reason for these can no longer be found in the moral duty of saving the lives of fellow-countrymen, they are now explained by the necessity of restoring the Sultan's authority. There is a section of the French Press which is urging the occupation of the capital of Morocco. It looks as though the French Government is afraid to assert its independence of the Press, and is trying to avoid making any public statement of a definite character as to its precise intentions.

The German Government, however, does not seem inclined to change its tactics. It is waiting, and will do nothing until it sees what turn events take.

I have it from an indirect but very reliable source that this reticence is causing anxiety to the French Ambassador in Berlin. He is annoyed that people here do not put absolute faith in the assurances of loyalty and disinterestedness which he is instructed to make in the name of the French Government. He complains that all his many efforts at the Wilhelmstrasse fail to bring about any positive result.

Was he expecting to get *carte blanche* for the French proceedings in Morocco? If any such hopes were enter-

tained in Paris, the French must have completely lost sight of the way in which the question first arose. It began in 1904 by England, France and Spain concluding agreements amongst themselves, without taking the trouble to consult the other Powers interested. Down to the moment when Germany raised objections, it was being openly said that Morocco was to become a second Tunis.

Alongside the open agreement, France was signing a secret treaty with Spain (a very ill-kept secret!) for the partition of the Moroccan Empire. The Act of Algeciras made no change in the schemes of France; it merely compelled her to carry out slowly, and step by step, what it had been hoped to do at a single stroke, as the Treaty of Bardo was extorted from the Bey of Tunis.<sup>30</sup> Since the Act of Algeciras, the work of progressive invasion in Morocco has never ceased to be methodically pursued. Little by little the French have got possession of everything, taking advantage of incidents which have arisen automatically, and creating other openings when they were needed, for the occupation of fresh territory.<sup>31</sup>

Can the expeditions now being prepared be regarded as anything else than another act of the same farce? Sultan Mulai Hafid has already lost his already precarious hold over his subjects, because he had to submit to become a mere tool in the hands of France. Any material assistance from French troops can only result in completely discrediting him and making it only possible to keep him on the throne by indefinitely prolonging an occupation which claims to be merely temporary.

I am still convinced that Germany wishes to avoid the necessity of entangling herself in the Moroccan affair; but I must repeat what I said in my despatch on May 1, i.e., that, when all is said and done, the question is a very delicate one, and is growing more and more so. If the Imperial Government is to be able to justify its inactivity in the teeth of public opinion throughout Germany, France must proceed with sufficient tact and ostensible moderation to enable her to maintain this passive attitude, but latterly neither the French Government nor a large section of the French Press have shown very promising signs of doing so.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE KAISER IN LONDON.

No. 71.

M. DAVIGNON, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *May 22, 1911.*

SIR,

With reference to my report of the 17th inst., I have the honour to inform you that the Emperor and Empress left London on May 20. M. de Treutler, of the German Foreign Office, informs me that they have preserved a most pleasant recollection of their visit, and that it has left an excellent impression. I myself observed that the tolerably friendly reception given by the public at first to the Imperial pair, increased in warmth with every day they stayed. The Emperor and Empress spared no pains. The populace, well informed beforehand of their movements, lined the streets in rows to watch them pass, and waited for hours to see them return from their various expeditions, and cheer them when they entered the palace. One could not walk through the London streets at any hour without coming across Court carriages filled with the Royal tourists, either alone or frequently accompanied by King George, the Queen, and the Royal children. The Imperial couple were most energetic, took an interest in all the diversions of the City, appeared at the theatre, visited the German Hospital, and wound up by attending the grand Court Ball. The presence of the young Princess, Victoria Louise, who went about everywhere with her august parents, contributed to give the visit the tone of a family gathering, and to help to win the sympathies of the public. To anyone, like myself, who had also been present at the Emperor's last visit (an official one) in November, 1907, the difference in the welcome given to his Imperial Majesty on the two occasions must have appeared as remarkable. Four years ago the attitude of the English nation was marked by a cold distrust. This time the atmosphere was much more genial, and was favoured by the absence of any military accompaniment. Troops and escort were dispensed with on the grounds of the private nature of the visit, which was strictly observed in the reception, and was further accentuated by the Emperor's refusal (couched, however, in very gracious

terms) to the request of M. Cambon, doyen of the Diplomatic Corps, to be admitted with his colleagues to tender their respects to his Majesty.

King Edward's death seems to have lessened somewhat the tension in the relations between England and Germany. It would seem as though at the time of those ententes so dear to the late monarch, the nation itself was conscious of the character of the policy being pursued towards Germany, and aware that the Government was openly making an attempt to encircle Germany, which could not but create ill-feeling in Berlin. The public was rather afraid of what the consequences might be, and from fear to hatred there is only a single step, which the anti-German Press took care should be taken. The scare,<sup>32</sup> so derided in Germany, was humiliating, and was felt to be here. Despite the Cassandras of the Army and Navy sets, people seem to have begun to pull themselves together, and then, just at the psychological moment, when the public was at last returning to commonsense, William II. appeared on the scene, his shining armour laid aside, in a plain frock coat, taking the Empress and Princess all over London in company with the English Royal children. The effect, though it may be transitory, is for the moment good. Queen Victoria's grandson seized an auspicious moment, and has no reason to regret it.

It is stated in the Press that the Emperor has invited the young Prince of Wales to pay him a visit to Potsdam. It is even hinted that the journey might be in connection with a possible matrimonial alliance between the Prince and Princess Victoria Louise, although the latter is two years older than the heir to the British throne. There has also been talk of the Duke of Connaught's only son, Prince Arthur, as a possible *fiancé* for the German Princess.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## FRANCO-SPANISH RIVALRY IN MOROCCO.

No. 72.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *June 17, 1911.*

SIR,

Since I had the honour to send you my report of May 24 last, there has, so far as one can judge, been no change in the waiting attitude maintained by Germany in relation to the Morocco affair. The rumour that the German Government would support Spain in her military action was promptly denied. It was hardly necessary. Germany has had no cause to thank the Spanish Government either at the time of the conclusion of the secret treaties, nor during the Algeciras negotiations. It was most unlikely that she would take action to defend Spanish interests when she did not think fit to do so for the sake of her own. If any illusions on this point were cherished at Madrid, Germany must have speedily dispelled them. They have confined themselves here to acknowledging the Spanish Ambassador's communication as to the occupation of Larash and El-Kasar, which, in imitation of France, was explained by the necessity of preserving order in the country, and, still imitating the French precedent, was accompanied by the assurance that the occupation would only be temporary.<sup>33</sup>

On the other hand, from what Herr Zimmermann told me yesterday, M. Cambon is almost every day labouring to show that there is an essential difference between the action of Spain and that of France in Morocco. One is in flagrant violation of the Act of Algeciras, whilst the other would only be in fulfilment of this Act. "I listen quite gravely to all these explanations," said the Secretary of State to me, and to mark a touch of irony he promptly added, "It is amusing to hear the pleadings in this bogus suit."

I asked M. Zimmermann whether there were no fear of the dispute between France and Spain provoking European complications. He replied that he thought not. Of course, there is no denying that affairs both in Morocco and in Albania present grave problems, but they will solve themselves. The Turkish Government, yielding to

Austria-Hungary's counsels of moderation, has already decided to declare the Albanian insurrection at an end.<sup>34</sup> In any case, said the Under-Secretary, Germany will conclude no second Act of Algeciras. The proof that nothing startling need be feared is that Herr von Kidelen-Waechter, whose leave should have expired about this time, intends to prolong his stay at Kissingen.

The German Government, therefore, maintains the same standpoint that it has taken up from the first. Its rôle is that of a simple spectator, reserving, however, its liberty of action should it happen that, as a consequence of French intervention, the essential clauses of the Act of Algeciras (i.e., the sovereignty of the Sultan and the integrity of Morocco) were to lapse.

Already they have practically ceased to exist. What moment will Germany think suitable for saying so, and what use will she make of her re-acquired freedom of action?

I am still convinced that the German Government is, above all, anxious to avoid a war. Morocco is not worth it; and France can save Europe from such a fate by infusing her conquest of Morocco with just the dose of hypocrisy sufficient to avoid stirring up public opinion in Germany.

Not everyone shares my opinion; and some of my colleagues are amazed at Germany's patience. One of them tells me that there is a rumour going round well-informed circles in Paris that negotiations have been opened with Berlin as to compensation to be given to Germany in the direction of the Kameroons or Dahomey. My colleague adds, however, that the rumour is contradicted here. I do not think it very likely to be true. Herr Zimmermann would not have spoken as he did yesterday had negotiations with the French Government been going on. What is untrue to-day may, however, be possible to-morrow.<sup>35</sup>

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE STORM BURSTS.

No. 73.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *July 2, 1911.*

SIR,

I need not tell you that the columns of the whole Paris Press are to-day taken up with the news of the despatch of a German man-of-war to Agadir, which became known last night.<sup>36</sup>

Obviously it is a serious matter; it may even become exceedingly serious, unless it be the outcome of an understanding between the Cabinets of Berlin and London.

It was long regarded as an axiom that England would never allow the Germans to establish themselves at any point on Moroccan territory. Has this policy been abandoned; and, if so, at what price were they bought off? It is a case of conceding facilities to England for her great Cape to Cairo railway? If so, we (i.e., Belgium) are closely concerned in this "deal."<sup>37</sup>

In any hypothesis the choice of Agadir is significant, and likely to involve important compensations. This ocean port is the key to a region which might be converted into a detached country, cut off to the north, and separated from the districts that are France's sphere of activity by the Atlas mountain range, which rises sheer from the shore, and rapidly reaches the height of some 15,000 feet. This region is the terminus point of the great caravan route, and is famous for its mineral wealth.<sup>38</sup>

What significance is to be attached to this action of the German Government, and to its choice of this moment for its execution? I have seen no one since yesterday, and, besides, it will for the present be very difficult to obtain any information about the matter. There is no doubt, however, that public opinion in France is not very favourable to the Morocco expedition. Politicians seem to be beginning to understand that people are not willing that a big army corps should be immobilised in these African regions just to suit the appetites of speculators.

M. Caillaux, when he formed his Cabinet, abstained from offering a post in it to M. Etienne, his supporter,

who was interested in Moroccan undertakings.<sup>39</sup> He selected M. de Selves for the Foreign Office, who, I am told, is anxious to put an end to the affair, and to get the French out of Fez.<sup>40</sup>

And this is the moment chosen by the German Government to set foot in Morocco! Is it possible that they have been misinformed as to the views of the new French Ministry? Or are we to suppose that, desiring a footing in Agadir, and hoping to justify their action by the precedents furnished by France and Spain, they thought it good tactics to precipitate matters, lest France should withdraw, and so deprive them of a plausible excuse. However that may be, M. Jaurès is triumphant to-day. He had all along blamed the Government for involving themselves in a bad business in Morocco, and maintained that there was never any necessity for going to Fez, and that the advance of the French army might become a source of serious embarrassments. There can to-day be no question that the attitude of the French Government brought about—or at least made possible—the Spanish landing at Larash, and the despatch of a German man-of-war to Agadir.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## EXCITEMENT IN LONDON.

No. 74.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *July 5, 1911.*

SIR,

The despatch of a German gunboat to Agadir has had the effect here of renewing all the excitement created by the occupation of Fez by French troops, and by the appearance of Spanish battalions at Larash and Alkassar. Sir Edward Grey who, as often happens, was away, has come back to London to confer with M. Paul Cambon. Hitherto the French and Spanish Ambassadors had been able to see no one, except Sir Arthur Nicholson. The first impression made by the news is already wearing off, owing to the fact that there is no report of any German landing having taken place on the Southern coast of

Morocco; and also, that the French Government appear to regard the occurrence with equanimity.<sup>41</sup> It is thought to be a reassuring symptom that the President's and M. de Selves's projected visit to Holland will still take place, and it is thought that the French reply to the Berlin Note will not be handed in until M. de Fallières returns. Between now and then an interchange of views will take place between the Cabinets of Paris, London, and St. Petersburg. The Stock Exchange has nevertheless been affected, and Consols have fallen to 78 15/16.

The English Press naturally blames the line adopted by Germany. It denies that any disturbance whatever exists in the neighbourhood of Sus (Agadir); and envisages the possible partition of Morocco, with some compensation to be given to the German Empire, either in that region or elsewhere.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, in reply to a question in Parliament about the political situation, said that the Government were considering the question, but could as yet make no statement. It is probable that Sir Edward Grey will speak on the subject to-morrow in the House of Commons. His position is not free from difficulty, for relations with Germany have lately been improving, and he would naturally wish to maintain them, and yet not appear backward in supporting France. Public opinion in England demands, in the name of the entente cordiale, that the British Government should support Paris in the present critical situation. It is necessary to appear a faithful friend to the French Government without giving the German Government any opening for complaints which would magnify the episode, and might even lead to European complications.

I have the honour, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

### THE FRENCH ATTITUDE.

No. 75.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *July 8, 1911.*

SIR,

The President of the French Republic is back from his visit to the Netherlands, and returned yesterday to Paris, together with the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

No doubt we shall know shortly how the French Government intends to reply to the communication from the Berlin Cabinet about Germany's intervention in Morocco.

There are not wanting people who think that the attitude of the Paris Cabinet has been deficient in dignity, and that the stress they have laid on the necessity for France to consult Russia and England before coming to a decision is hardly worthy of a great Power.

The truth is that the Caillaux Cabinet had scarcely got into the saddle, and was taken unawares. The inexperience of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and several of his colleagues, the disorganised condition of so much of the French administrative machinery, a holy dread of complications and war, all gave rise to downright timidity in Government circles.

They wanted to gain time; they asked advice from this quarter and that, and, favoured by M. Delcassé's Anglo-mania, they addressed themselves to Great Britain.

I have reason to think that M. Caillaux may have already come to regret their insistence on this point, and the tone adopted at St. James's. There will be much less likelihood of coming to an understanding with Germany if England has any say in the matter, and I am persuaded that Messrs. Caillaux and de Selves regret the turn given to the Moroccan affair by their predecessors in office. They were quite ready to give way, provided they could do so without humiliation.<sup>42</sup>

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

### SIR E. GREY'S SPEECH.

No. 76.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *July 3, 1911.*

SIR,

Following on my report of the 3rd inst., I have the honour to inform you that the day before yesterday the Prime Minister made the following statement in the House of Commons: "Recent events are causing discussion between the Powers most interested in

Morocco; and at this stage I can say very little of the negotiations which are passing between them. But I wish it clearly to be understood that His Majesty's Government consider that a new situation has arisen in Morocco, in which it is possible that future developments may affect British interests more directly than has hitherto been the case. I am confident that diplomatic discussion will find a solution, and in the part that we shall take in it we shall have due regard to the protection of those interests, and to the fulfilment of our treaty obligations to France, which are well known to the House."<sup>43</sup> It is interesting to note that Mr. Asquith lays stress on the new situation as possibly affecting English interests more directly. The idea of Agadir, under certain contingencies becoming a naval base for the German fleet, is of a nature to make the Government of the United Kingdom uneasy.<sup>44</sup>

The Press recalls the fact that if Great Britain did not interfere with France over the Morocco question, it was because France, in her turn, left her a free hand in Egypt; but that England never dreamt of allowing Germany to set foot in Morocco.

Believe me, etc..

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S DECLARATION AT THE MANSION HOUSE.

No. 77.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *July 24, 1911.*

SIR,

Hitherto, the Cabinets of Berlin and Paris have made no official communication as to their "conversations"; and one has to rest content with the newspaper reports, most of these negligible or partisan, and some may be regarded as "feelers."

It is, however, scarcely possible not to believe—seeing that the rumour, though often repeated, has never been contradicted—that Germany is claiming "compensation" from France on the African Coast, in the Congo.

The French papers, whilst protesting, preserve a calmness which is very significant when compared with the tone

they recently adopted about the Madrid Cabinet. It is painful to see that Germany inspires fear, whilst they are not afraid of Spain. I say no more. The same papers profess not to understand on what grounds the German Government could claim compensation.

It is clear enough, however, to all who admit that France had no good excuse for going to Fez, that she will find some difficulty in withdrawing, or else will be obliged to return there, and that she has violated the spirit of the Act of Algeciras. If, in view of these facts, Germany claims some "compensation," it is that she has no intention of forcing France to withdraw, nor yet of establishing herself at Agadir. But she considers that the Republican Government has upset the balance of power that was agreed upon, and she claims her share.

It is not possible to estimate what may be the importance of the compensations demanded, nor their possible bearing from our Belgian point of view, seeing that we have nothing reliable to go upon as to their nature. One fact, however, seems more certain, and that is, that the policy being pursued by the Wilhelmstrasse<sup>45</sup> at this moment is causing lively annoyance in England.

Directly it was known that a German gun-boat had been sent to Agadir, I had the honour to write you that, in my opinion, the crux of the question was how they would take it in London; and I pointed out that Great Britain had never admitted the possibility of Germany getting the slightest foothold on the coast of Morocco. The Cabinet of St. James were not slow in making this known at Berlin.

To-day the warning, though couched in more general and vague terms, was no less in earnest; and your attentive eye cannot have overlooked the speech made by Mr. Lloyd George the day before yesterday, at the close of the banquet given by the Lord Mayor to the Directors of the Bank of England. I have no doubt that you were specially struck with the following: "I would make great sacrifices to preserve peace. I conceive that nothing could justify a disturbance of international goodwill except questions of the gravest national moment. But if a situation were to be forced upon us in which peace could only be preserved by the surrender of the great and beneficent position Britain has won by centuries of heroism and achievement by allowing Britain to be treated where her interests were vitally affected as if she were of no account

in the Cabinet of nations, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure. National honour is no party question; the security of our great international trade is no party question; the peace of the world is much more likely to be secured if all nations realise fairly what the conditions of peace must be."<sup>46</sup> Such words need no commentary. They constitute a warning which will, I have no doubt, be listened to, for I am convinced that Berlin does not desire serious complications; that they do not wish for war, and that they are above all anxious to avoid being drawn into one over the question of Morocco. But the foreign affairs of the Empire have, within limits prescribed by the Emperor and the Chancellor, been placed in the hands of a man who, highly deserving as he is (and I know him from of old), is yet rough and abrupt in his ways, and would certainly have been sorry had his entrance into the Cabinet not been marked by some sensation. I am not surprised that he began his ministerial reign by thumping the round table over which the great international questions are transacted. But he is too perspicacious, and will be too tightly reined in, for any fear that Germany is about to start on a political career of danger and violence.

The situation is, nevertheless, strained; not enough is known as to the relations between Berlin and Madrid in what concerns their Moroccan policy, and it is hard to believe that the events whose progress we are watching will not leave—for a while at least—a certain nervous irritability that will be injurious in respect to many international affairs.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

### THE "TIMES" ARTICLES.

No. 78.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *July 24, 1911.*

SIR,

You will have been able to judge from the *Times* article of the 20th,<sup>47</sup> to which I had the honour to call your attention, with what extravagant pretensions Germany is

credited in this country; so much so, indeed, that they were alluded to by a member of the Cabinet, the impulsive Chancellor of the Exchequer, in a speech at a city banquet on the 21st.<sup>48</sup>

After expressing his sympathy with the principle of arbitration, and his good wishes for the success of the negotiations that Sir E. Grey is carrying on with the United States, Mr. Lloyd George went on to say that, in his opinion, however, Great Britain ought at all costs to maintain that prestige as a Great Power which has enabled her in the past to redeem certain continental nations, albeit they are sometimes apt to forget past services. To maintain peace one may make sacrifices, but if it were a case of treating England as having no importance in the Concert of Europe, then he would consider peace too dearly purchased on those terms.

The Press of all parties comments favourably on this speech, whose object seems to be to show Germany that the Anglo-French Entente is not to be regarded as a negligible quantity. I enclose two articles from the *Times* of the 22nd.<sup>49</sup>

At the Foreign Office they seem to think that the German Government is asking a great deal with a view to accepting more moderate concessions finally.

At the conclusion of his speech, Mr. Lloyd George took care to add that he did not, however, expect any serious international complications. Despite this reassuring phrase, the speech made a great sensation, for, in spite of the speaker's impetuous nature, it seems unlikely that he would have spoken in this way without the approval of his colleagues.<sup>50</sup>

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## BRITAIN AND PEACE.

No. 79.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, July 28, 1911.

SIR,

I had an opportunity, yesterday, of meeting some of my colleagues—the better-informed ones for the most part—

and they confessed to me that they could not succeed in learning anything relative to the course of the conversations which are going on about Moroccan affairs. Never was secret so well kept, nor such absolute silence maintained.

For the rest, I found that my colleagues had much the same impression as myself. Undoubtedly the present situation wears a serious aspect, and incidents might occur that would find this disturbed state of affairs a ready soil in which to take root. Nobody, however, wants war, and they will try to avoid it.

A very typical kind of international "bluff" is being indulged in, a regular haggling carried on through the semi-official Press reports, with the object of sounding public opinion.

France does not, and cannot, desire that the matter should end in a total fiasco. The French Government knows that a war would be the death-knell of the Republic. I have very great confidence in the Emperor William's love of peace, notwithstanding the not infrequent air of melodrama about what he says and does. He will not be carried away any further than he chooses by the boisterous temperament and heavy-handedness of his very intelligent Minister at the Foreign Office.

It was always like that. Germany cannot go to war for the sake of Morocco, nor yet to exact payment of those compensations that she very reasonably demands for the French occupation of Fez, which has become more or less permanent. On the whole I feel less faith in Great Britain's desire for peace. She would not be sorry to see the others destroying one another; only, under these circumstances, it would be difficult for her to avoid armed intervention.

As it is, English domestic politics are in a very unsettled state, and the Liberal Party is in power.

As I thought from the very first, the crux of the situation is in London. It is there only that there may be serious developments.<sup>51</sup> The French will give way on all points to preserve peace. But it is not so with the English. There are rules and claims by which they will abide; but one would rather not see them driven to extremity.

Enclosed you will find an interesting article from *Le Temps*, and a fairly temperate one from *Le Matin*.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## DIVIDED COUNSELS IN PARIS.

No. 80.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *August 10, 1911.*

SIR,

In my report of July 8 last, I had the honour to tell you that, as I was informed, M. Caillaux at that time regretted the importance attached by the French Government to getting instructions from London as to the attitude which it ought to adopt towards the dispatch of a German man-of-war to Agadir, and that he was said not to approve the line then taken by the Cabinet at St. James's.

This information seems to be confirmed. England's first movement, so I am assured, was to propose to France that each of the two Governments should immediately dispatch two men-of-war to the coast of Agadir. The Paris Cabinet strongly objected, and the matter went no further.<sup>52</sup>

It is interesting to note the various phases in the English Cabinet's attitude. First, there was the scheme for sending men-of-war, next Mr. Lloyd George's rather offensive speech, and finally the wise words of Mr. Asquith.

France has the good fortune to be represented at Berlin and London by her two best diplomatists—the two M. Cambons. It is a question how far the attitude of the French Ambassador in England may have determined and modified the attitude of the Cabinet of St. James. The two brothers are on excellent terms; there is no rivalry between them, and it is quite possible that on the day, when the English Prime Minister expressed the desire of awaiting patiently the outcome of the conversation going on at Berlin, he was influenced by M. Cambon, who was ready to answer for his brother's skill, and was anxious that he should score a personal triumph.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## THE FRANCO-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS.

No. 81.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, October 12, 1911.

SIR,

The part of the agreement between Germany and France, which relates to Morocco itself, was initialled yesterday at noon by Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter and M. Cambon. It was made public the very same evening in a directly inspired *communiqué* in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*. So the Secretary of State is justified in his optimism which I had the honour to transmit to you on the last occasion in my report of October 2. It is to be hoped that it will be possible to say the same about that part of the negotiations now about to begin, which concern the territorial compensations claimed by Germany. In this respect the tone of the French Press makes me seriously uneasy. Every day the papers oppose with increasing vehemence any diminution whatever of France's existing colonial territory. They seem to have quite lost sight of the real state of the question.

Here communications on the subject of the Moroccan affair are very few, but we have been kept more than well informed by the Paris newspapers. The communications supplied to the French Press have been described at Berlin as inopportune and regrettable; but they have not been contradicted, and must, therefore, be regarded as, on the whole, accurate. According to them Germany has obtained a promise that her trade shall enjoy freedom in Morocco on an equal footing with France and the other countries interested. She has got this already by the treaty of Algeciras, in confirmation of the treaty of Madrid. These international agreements further guaranteed to her the independence of the Sultan and the integrity of Moroccan territory. As a matter of fact neither exists any longer; but as a matter of law both still survive; and Germany concedes a great deal to France when she renounces them by consenting to the establishment of a French protectorate in Morocco. The Imperial Government has, it seems,

taken precautions that the promises given at Berlin shall be better kept than those of Algenciras, which from the first have been systematically broken. In Paris they profess to think that France is making a concession by agreeing to those terms; whereas it is at most a limitation of Germany's concessions. Germany alone has made any so far. It is now the turn of France to make concessions by ceding the territory promised. The Paris papers seem to have quite forgotten that the two portions of the proposed treaty are indissolubly linked; but they are, doubtless, in no mood here to treat them apart.

I have reason to believe that the French Government is credited here with a sincere desire to observe its pledges. But the French Government is weak, and depends on the humour of an uncertain majority. Will it have the courage and the strength to resist the impetus, should public opinion wax strongly in favour of rejecting any territorial compensation?

We must congratulate ourselves on the first part of the Moroccan convention which has been agreed to; but the danger for Belgium will not be wholly dispelled until the whole of the Treaty has been signed and approved by the Parliaments of both countries.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## BRITISH PREPARATIONS FOR WAR.

No. 82.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *November 18, 1911.*

SIR,

On returning to my post last September, I learnt from various quarters that the general political situation had been judged sufficiently serious, a few weeks previously, for the English Government to think it necessary to take exceptional precautions. It has come to me, from pretty reliable sources, that the officers of the active army were at that time suddenly recalled from leave, that horses had been purchased for the cavalry, and that the North Sea Squadron had been temporarily placed upon a war footing.<sup>53</sup>

A letter written by J. Ramsay MacDonald, a Socialist member of Parliament, to the Socialist editor of *Vorwärts*, gives some interesting details of this critical period. Mr. MacDonald declares that war was only avoided thanks to the personal intervention of the Kaiser, to whom both the Tsar and King George had written.

A Radical M.P., Mr. Ponsonby, speaking at the Reform Club, confirmed the truth of the rumours about the naval and military preparations. The *Daily News* of yesterday published two articles, which I enclose.

In the House of Commons several members have insisted that the Government should make the nation acquainted with what passed this summer between the Cabinets of London, Berlin and Paris, for no information has been laid before Parliament since the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Lloyd George, delivered his famous speech.

Sir Edward Grey is expected to make an interesting speech on foreign politics during the course of next week. The Foreign Secretary may possibly take the opportunity to enlighten the public not only as to Anglo-German relations, but also as to Great Britain's assent to the Franco-German agreement relating to Morocco, and as to the line which England is taking in the Franco-Spanish negotiations that are now proceeding.

Apparently there are grounds for thinking that the King of Spain has requested King George's official support under the present circumstances.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## BRITISH AND GERMAN VERSIONS OF THE CRISIS.

No. 83.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

SIR,

LONDON, November 28, 1911.

Sir Edward Grey's speech, awaited with impatience in London, Berlin and Paris, and with lively interest in the other capitals, was delivered yesterday in the Commons to a packed House.

The English nation was hoping to learn, first of all, what

were the real causes of that tension in Anglo-German relations in the Fez last year, of which the public were only made aware very late. Secondly, the nation expected to be informed as to the nature of the engagements—if any actually existed—which might have been contracted between Great Britain and the French Republic, unknown to the Parliament of 1904. As I had the honour to write to you on the 21st inst., this, though improbable, was a possibility that had been disquieting some minds ever since the recent scare. The popularity of the *entente cordiale* depended on its not involving England in unlooked for expenditure of men and money.

The German Press, on the other hand, did not conceal its view, that any improvement in the present frigid relations between Germany and England would depend on what the Secretary for the Foreign Office might say in his speech.

At Paris the question was, whether the *entente* would emerge from this test intact and without any loss of its popularity in England.

Sir Edward Grey announced that he should confine himself for the present to dealing with the Moroccan question. (In the end, however, he did touch on Persia and on Tripoli.) He expounded the English point of view, which, as might have been foreseen, differed somewhat from the German line of argument.

GERMAN VERSION.—This can be summed up in a few words: On June 30 Germany informed the Powers which had signed the Act of Algeciras that the Panther had been sent to Agadir to protect German subjects against danger from the natives. *The German Government had no designs of acquiring territory.* On July 21 Sir Edward Grey asked Count Metternich for an explanation of the continued presence of the ship in the Moroccan port, adding that, should the Franco-German negotiations come to nothing, the question of Agadir might become acute. He requested that England should be admitted to the negotiations. It seemed that the demands put forward by Germany could not be accepted by France.

The German Ambassador denied that the demands of his Government were such as made them unacceptable, and desired Sir Edward Grey to mention the English interests that might be regarded as imperilled. England had received compensation in Egypt; but so far Germany had received no compensation. England appeared to have

two different weights and measures, according as she was dealing with France or with Germany.

On the evening of the same day, July 21—before, therefore, the interview between Sir Edward Grey and Count Metternich could be known in Berlin—Mr. Lloyd George made the famous speech which so annoyed the Imperial Government.<sup>54</sup>

On the 24th the German Government instructed their Ambassador to say that Germany had no idea of acquiring territory in Morocco. They requested Sir Edward Grey, however, to say nothing about it in the House, lest it might appear as though Germany were yielding to Mr. Lloyd George's threats.

Now the version given by the English Foreign Office Secretary is as follows:

ENGLISH VERSION.—According to him, the German account of the affair is incomplete. From a communication verbally made by the Ambassador on July 1, he understood that, in sending a man-of-war to Agadir, the Berlin Cabinet had in view a partition of Morocco. (Sir E. Grey does not seem to have understood that the gunboat was only temporarily stationed at Agadir.) On July 24 Sir Edward Grey said to Count Metternich that a new situation had arisen which affected England's interests, and that the question was to be discussed at a Cabinet Council. Later, the Press announced that Germany had put forward claims with regard to the French Congo that France could not accept. And on July 21 the English Minister told the Ambassador that the presence of a German vessel at Agadir gave cause for uneasiness, in view of a possible rupture of the Franco-German negotiations then in progress. On the same day the Chancellor of the Exchequer made the speech in which he said outright that when British interests were at stake the English Government could not be treated as being of no importance. "On the day when the Chancellor of England could not say this, England would have ceased to be a great nation." In view of the tone of the German communications, Sir E. Grey did not conceive it consonant with the dignity of the British Government to make an explanation on the subject of Mr. Lloyd George's speech. It was not till July 24 that Count Metternich denied any intention on Germany's part to establish a naval base at Agadir, whilst begging Sir E. Grey to say nothing about it in Parliament.

There was then, at that time, a possibility of the Franco-German negotiations being broken off. The situation gave cause for uneasiness. Why? Because one of the Powers that had signed the Treaty of Algeciras might have demanded the summoning of a Conference, and Germany expressed herself as opposed to it. The situation was a delicate one for England, for Morocco would be occupied by three Powers, France, Germany and Spain, whilst England would be excluded.

In short, Sir E. Grey accuses the Imperial Government of having waited until July 24 to declare that they had no designs upon the territory of Morocco (which does not seem to tally with the German version); and he further accuses it of trying to exclude England from any arrangement in the event of the failure of the negotiations between Paris and Berlin. Such were the origins of the recent strained relations.

For the rest, Sir Edward Grey said that there was no cause for alarm: there was to-day no question of war. No secret treaty with France existed any longer.<sup>55</sup> England asked no better than to live on good terms with Germany, without sacrificing her other friendships. She does not covet further territorial expansion in Africa.<sup>56</sup>

Sir E. Grey's speech was well received, and was successful in allaying a good deal of nervousness. The conclusion drawn from it was that the crisis was over, that the *entente cordiale* is not an alliance in disguise,<sup>57</sup> and that England, having loyally supported France (as it was to her interest to do), is disposed to be conciliatory towards Germany. The new leader of the Opposition, Mr. Bonar Law, supported the Government, and voiced the Conservative approval of Sir Edward Grey's policy. The Labour Party were alone in attacking it. The Prime Minister also spoke, and said that Great Britain loved peace and did not wish to keep any other Power out of its place in the sun.

From the rival German and English versions of the conversations that took place between Count Metternich and Sir Edward Grey, the conclusion seems to be that Sir Edward Grey did not understand at the beginning, on July 1, that Germany promised to recall her man-of-war directly order was re-established in Morocco; and that this, according to German ideas, was tantamount to saying that the Imperial Government had no design of establishing a naval base at Agadir. Sir Edward Grey makes out that he did not receive this assurance until July 24.

Later on, in reply to questions last night, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs spoke about Persia and Tripoli. He defended the Anglo-Russian arrangement in Persia, and said that the line which the Russian Government is taking at present is quite understandable, and that Persia ought to pay some regard to the interests of Russia and England, and not expect to shake off all Russian influence. Passing to the subject of Tripoli,<sup>58</sup> Sir Edward Grey said that he was not in a position to know the exact truth as to what had occurred. The Turks and Italians were bringing mutual charges against one another. The English Government preserved its attitude of neutrality and non-intervention.<sup>59</sup>

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

### LORD COURTNEY'S UNWELCOME TRUTH.

No. 84.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *November 30, 1911.*

SIR,

Lord Lansdowne, as leader of the Conservative Opposition in the House of Lords, expressed approval of the speech by Sir Edward Grey, about which I had the honour of communicating with you on the 28th inst. He only regretted that the famous speech, that was elaborated in the Cabinet Council and caused such a stir in Berlin, had been made by Mr. Lloyd George, rather than by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who was so much better qualified to deal with the matter. He went on to say that in his opinion the entente cordiale had emerged from the crisis even stronger than before, and that both it and the Anglo-Russian entente were destined to be permanent.

Lord Courtney of Penwith, a Liberal and a friend of Germany, attacked the policy of the Government on the grounds that it had been directed to isolating Germany (this truth is rarely uttered in the British Parliament) and that it had not upheld the Act of Algeciras. Sir Edward Grey (he said) ought to have discouraged the Paris Cabinet from holding the provisions of an inter-

national Act so cheap. He might then have avoided friction with Berlin, and the Italian expedition to Tripoli would probably never have taken place.<sup>60</sup>

A shortsighted encouragement of French ambitions had brought about the deplorably strained relations with Germany.

These unwelcome truths were not relished by the House of Lords.

One passage in Lord Lansdowne's speech deserves notice. It is where he speaks of the secret articles of 1904 that were published lately.<sup>61</sup> He admitted that in a case of this kind a promise to give diplomatic support to another Power might involve an obligation to furnish that Power with help of a different kind. (Read military or naval.) An entente cordiale brings two countries into very close relations with one another, and they cannot remain indifferent. Should one of them find itself, through no fault of its own, in an awkward predicament, it expects the friendly country to back it up.

One may read between the lines that, in the opinion of Lord Lansdowne, who was one of the originators of the entente cordiale, his instrument may, without being an alliance, nevertheless under certain circumstances carry all the implications of a defensive treaty between the two nations.

Lord Weardale and Lord Newton supported Lord Courtney in his criticisms. England had supported France against Germany, hence Germany's irritation and the difficulty of improving relations with Berlin.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

### EFFECTS OF SIR E. GREY'S SPEECH IN GERMANY.

No. 85.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *December 6, 1911.*

SIR,

In my report of November 30 last I had the honour to write to you that Sir Edward Grey's speech in the House of Commons on November 27 had created a bad impression

in Germany. This bad impression continues. The papers have scarcely mentioned anything in the Parliamentary debates tending, not indeed to restore normal relations, which is not possible at once in the present state of irritation, but at least to smooth the way for a better understanding in the future.

In his speeches of November 9 and 10, in the Reichstag, the German Chancellor had evinced the most conciliatory disposition. Sir Edward Grey himself acknowledged that Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg had succeeded in avoiding anything that might jar on public opinion in England. Speaking of what Germany had gained by the treaties of November 21, the Chancellor said that the agreement concluded with France would also have a good effect upon Germany's relations with England. Throughout the whole of the Moroccan affair the British Government, bound by its treaty engagements, had always sided with France—diplomatically, at least—and now that the question has been settled, the slate is left clean.

Briefly and discreetly expressed, this amounted to a very distinct wish that recrimination over the past should cease, and that a new era of good understanding between the two countries might begin.

To reject Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's advances could hardly have been done without—so to speak—smashing windows, and Mr. Asquith and the leader of the Opposition, Mr. Bonar Law, acknowledged them very cordially. Sir Edward Grey, too, did his best to adopt the correct attitude, but with marked coldness. It is true that he expressed the desire to do everything that lay within his power to amend Anglo-German relations. The friendships that Great Britain has established already, and to which he intends to be loyal, do not prevent her from forming others. Far from seeking to upset the recent negotiations between Germany and France, he is sincerely glad that they have come to an agreement. He understands Germany's need for expansion, and has no intention of putting obstacles in her way. He even suggests the quarter in which Germany might exercise her colonising activities. It is in Africa, where England does not propose to enlarge her possessions. (Can it be that he is thinking of bartering ours away in pursuance of those new principles of international law as practised in London, and, unfortunately, elsewhere too?<sup>62</sup> Morocco, Tripoli, Persia.) Sir Edward Grey declares that he does not believe that

Germany entertains designs hostile to England; nor does England entertain any scheme hostile to Germany, and she would not lend her support to any third Power that might adopt a hostile or provocative attitude.

All this would have been admirable if Sir Edward Grey had only stopped at this point, but his whole speech is permeated by an undisguised feeling of mistrust towards Germany, and his amiable assertions are weakened by qualifications which completely neutralise their effect. Thus he lays down as a condition of any *rapprochement* with Germany that his French and Russian friends should also be included in it: as if it were not a notorious fact that no French Government would dare to attempt anything of the sort in the teeth of public opinion in France.

The comments of the German newspapers deal almost exclusively with these qualifications. The expressions which indicate a desire for conciliation are passed over unnoticed; or, if they are mentioned, it is merely incidentally, and in such a way as to suggest that the Germans have had enough of such assurances, which are always lavished on each of those numerous occasions when there is an effort after an Anglo-German *rapprochement*, and whose effect is always ephemeral in the extreme.

Attention is concentrated almost exclusively on those passages in the Foreign Secretary's speech where he proclaims his unshakable determination to carry on the policy of the entente cordiale, that entente cordiale which developed into the Triple entente under the auspices of King Edward VII., assisted by the Conservative Party, and which they left as a legacy to the Liberals. Sir Edward Grey declared that, beyond the treaty that has been published, no secret treaty exists. I cast no doubt upon his sincerity; but it is none the less true that, whether there be or no a written or verbal agreement, everyone in England and France regards the entente cordiale as a defensive and offensive alliance against Germany. And such, certainly, is the character which the late King of England desired to stamp upon it. The entente cordiale was founded not on the positive basis of defence of common interests, but in the negative one of hatred of the German Empire. Had it been interpreted in any other way in Paris, it would not have been hailed as a diplomatic success of such splendour as to efface the humiliation of Fashoda. The idea of "revanche" was slumbering soundly before; it was the entente cordiale

that aroused it once more, and it too is the source of that state of nervousness and uneasiness with which Europe has had to contend for the last seven years.

Sir Edward Grey adopts this tradition without reservation. He imagines that it is in conformity with English interests. In his judgment the ancient system of splendid isolation is no longer possible, and the great majority of Englishmen support him. The Conservative and Liberal newspapers alike sing his praises. Only the Labour Party and the Radicals have ventured any criticism; and they are not numerous enough to have any influence on the trend of events.

A revision of Great Britain's policy is all the less to be looked for, as ever since the Liberal Ministry took office, and more especially during the last few months, English foreign policy has been guided by the ideas with which King Edward VII. inspired it.

Sir Edward Grey described the scares on the Continent as political alcoholism, and tried to dismiss with a joke the awkward situation in which he finds himself owing to Captain Faber's revelations.<sup>63</sup> He did not, however, deny their accuracy, as he would certainly have done, had it been possible. His silence as good as confirmed them. For the present, therefore, one may regard it as a certainty that a project was discussed in London for aiding France in a war against Germany by landing an army corps of 150,000 English soldiers. There is nothing surprising in this. It is a sequence of the strange proposals made to General Ducarne by Colonel Barnardiston some years ago,<sup>64</sup> as well as of the Flushing intrigue.<sup>65</sup>

Neither was Sir Edward Grey successful in trying to make out that Mr. Lloyd George's speech at the Lord Mayor's banquet did not contain a challenge and a threat. Had he been trying to prove the opposite he could not have expressed himself otherwise.

Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg had made things easy for him in his speech of November 9 by representing Mr. Lloyd George's speech as mere after-dinner talk, which would have had no importance had it not been taken up by the French and English Press.

Sir Edward Grey was careful to make it known that the speech was not hastily improvised, nor an expression of personal opinion on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but that the words had been discussed and

decided upon by the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George and himself.

England had relinquished her political claims in Morocco. Was it, then, with the object of facilitating a good understanding that she demanded a hand in the negotiations about Morocco? Or was she seeking to intervene in the interests of France?

And was it not assuming the right of veto on German enterprise for England to start a hue and cry because a German cruiser cast anchor in the roads of Agadir seeing that she had looked on without a murmur whilst France and Spain had proceeded step by step to conquer Morocco and to destroy the independence of its Sultan?<sup>66</sup>

England could not have acted otherwise. She was tied by her secret treaty with France. The explanation was extremely simple, but it was not of a sort to allay German irritation. The deduction is, in effect, that at the time when they were signing the Act of Algeciras, three, at least, of the Powers involved were contracting mutual engagements that were incompatible with their public pledges.<sup>67</sup>

Such are the complaints which the German nation makes against England, and to which expression is given through the Press. You will have noticed, sir, that the Chancellor passed over most of this in silence in his speech yesterday in the Reichstag, which was the necessary reply to Sir Edward Grey. Wishing, as he said, to avoid futile recriminations about the past, Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg said no more than was necessary in order to disavow—in moderate but plain and vigorous terms—responsibility for the tension in Anglo-German relations; a tension for which Sir Edward Grey had tried to throw the blame on the German Government. The Chancellor cannot understand how the British Government could have conceived the idea that the Imperial Government was trying to secure a naval base in the Atlantic or to infringe English interests, seeing that the British Government was kept by the French Government in daily touch with the course of the negotiations, and could have obtained any additional explanation by applying for it to Berlin. The Foreign Office had every opportunity of knowing that Germany's only aim was to make the practice of the open door more secure in the interests of all the Powers, England included, and to obtain a compensation in Central Africa to which Sir Edward Grey

had declared himself indifferent. The English Secretary of State would have spared himself all that anxiety to which he had referred if he had placed more faith in the communication which was made to him at the time when the *Panther* was despatched to Agadir.

The silence following upon this, and of which Sir Edward Grey complains, was mutual; and it would never have caused such excitement had it not been broken by the sensational after-dinner speech of a prominent member of the English Cabinet.

Sir Edward Grey says that England cannot allow a question affecting her interests to be settled without her. Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's reply is that Germany never dreamt of disputing this, but claims that the same consideration be shown towards herself. The difficulties of the Moroccan affair were brought about because in 1904 England and France tried to settle the question between themselves in disregard of Germany's interests. Now the crisis is over, and the Chancellor associates himself with the English Ministers' expressed wish to see friendly relations established between the two countries. This is only possible if England steers her policy accordingly. German expansion is a fact which other nations must recognise. Nothing can stop it. The experience of forty years has shown what German policy is. The strength of the Empire is a guarantee of peace, because it does away with the desire to treat the Empire with provocation.

The Chancellor concluded by exhorting his fellow-countrymen not to be led away into either of the opposite extremes of depression or arrogance, but to preserve their commonsense and unite on all big national questions.

This speech was well received by the Reichstag and interrupted by frequent applause.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## A BLACK OUTLOOK.

No. 86.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *December 9, 1911.*

SIR,

Sir Edward Grey, at Plymouth, replied briefly to the Imperial Chancellor's speech in the Reichstag dealing with the relations prevailing between Germany and England. Each of the statesmen has now said all that needed to be said from his point of view, and the Press has commented on it. The incident is now closed; recriminations are useless; and silence appears to be agreed upon. Let us hope that it will not be broken. The matter has reached a point at which fresh explanations only lead to fresh misunderstandings.

As a matter of fact relations are far from being improved, despite the formally expressed desire to render them more cordial.

The deduction to be most clearly drawn from Sir Edward Grey's speech is, that he intends to carry on the policy of the Triple entente in the same spirit as hitherto—that is to say, in a spirit of hostility towards Germany.

Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg's speech indicates no less clearly, that he is by no means disposed to admit the right of veto which England claims over German enterprise, and that, as regards any *rapprochement*, he looks to the British Government for deeds, not words.

There is as little harmony between the two nations as between their Governments. The English continue to look with a jealous eye on German expansion. The Germans, who as lately as six months ago felt no hostility towards England, are to-day hostile.

Relations have not gone back to that state of icy propriety which marked them before the crisis. They have grown worse, and will remain so, I fear, for a long time.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES TO TEXT.

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<sup>1</sup> This meeting led to the Potsdam agreement, which momentarily resulted in restoring harmonious relations between Russia and Germany, and to the settlement of the Russo-German dispute over the Bagdad railway. Germany recognised that Northern Persia was in the Russian sphere of influence: Russia agreed to maintain the open door in Northern Persia. Russia recognised German interests in the Bagdad railway, and promised her diplomatic support for its completion. Arrangements were eventually agreed upon for linking up the Bagdad railway with the Russian lines in Northern Persia.

<sup>2</sup> The new German Foreign Secretary.

<sup>3</sup> This refers to the disturbances in Greek internal politics arising out of friction with Turkey over the question of Crete's union with Greece.

<sup>4</sup> Bulgaria was pushing the Macedonian question: a phase of pro-Russianism arising out of her improved relations with Petrograd.

<sup>5</sup> The two reigning families were inter-related.

<sup>6</sup> Count Pountalès was German Ambassador at Petrograd, and it was through him that Germany, in March, 1909, definitely informed Russia that she (Germany) was determined to support Austria in the Bosnian matter in accordance with the terms of the Austro-German Alliance. Bogitchevitch ("Causes of the War," *op. cit.*) declares that, "contrary to what has been maintained," the German representations were "by no means put in a blunt and harsh form, rather, however, in a friendly tone, a fact acknowledged by the Russian Government to the German Government on more than one occasion. . . ."

<sup>7</sup> The Tsar and the Kaiser were personally intimate for many years.

<sup>8</sup> Russia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, who fell as the result of the Bosnian affair.

<sup>9</sup> See Note 1-5, Part IV.

<sup>10</sup> The French Telegraphic Agency.

<sup>11</sup> The reported intention of the Dutch Government to fortify Flushing gave rise to an acrimonious Press controversy in France, Germany and Britain.

<sup>12</sup> The newly-appointed Belgian Minister to France.

<sup>13</sup> Foreign Minister in the Mons Ministry, which took office in March, 1911. Caillaux was Finance Minister and Delcassé Naval Minister.

<sup>14</sup> A Franco-German newspaper controversy arising out of a statement by *Le Temps* to the effect that deserters from the French "Foreign Legion" were being received by German commanders of frontier garrisons, and either absorbed into a brigade of paid spies, or assisted to escape. The "Foreign Legion," so-called, is composed of adventurers of all nationalities, and an atmosphere of romance was woven round them by "Ouida" in her novel "Under Two Flags."

<sup>15</sup> This was the famous debate in which the naval "scare" speeches in 1909 were virtually admitted to have had no foundation. Mr. McKenna acknowledged that he had been misled in 1909. Sir E. Grey's speech was conciliatory in tone.

<sup>16</sup> See Note 7, Part II.

<sup>17</sup> The statement announced a modification of the attitude previously taken up.

<sup>18</sup> "Compensation" negotiations began in 1909 and continued throughout the next eighteen months. An agreement was signed in December, 1910, but dropped by the French Government in view of the hostility of the French Chamber. Another agreement was signed in February, 1911, by the Briand Cabinet. M. Briand was defeated shortly afterwards, and the Monis Ministry would not confirm it. Innumerable financial intrigues characterised these negotiations, on both sides.

<sup>19</sup> See "Empire and Commerce in Africa," by Leonard Woolf (Labour Research Department, and George Allen & Unwin), for an admirable summary of France's dealings with Tunis; for another account, written from the standpoint of European imperialism, see Sir Harry Johnston's "The Colonisation of Africa" (Cambridge University Press).

<sup>20</sup> The Franco-German Morocco agreement of that date. See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," by E. D. Morel (National Labour Press).

<sup>21</sup> One of the missing despatches.

<sup>22</sup> M. Pichon declared upon innumerable occasions that France was seeking neither a Protectorate over, nor a conquest of, Morocco. See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy" (*op. cit.*).

<sup>23</sup> The French Government declared that its only object was to rescue the Europeans in Fez alleged to be imperilled, and that it would then retire.

<sup>24</sup> Spain objected to French action as partaking of the nature of "jumping the claim" without consulting her.

<sup>25</sup> The whole story was a myth, and was subsequently exposed by Frenchmen (see "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy"). Official documents published while the present volume was being printed complete the exposure. Reporting on April 15, 1911, the Belgian Consul at Tangier states that mails are going through to Fez "fairly regularly," and that the tribal fighting around Fez is "more noisy than murderous." The same official, reporting on May 2, 1911, quotes the French *Chargé d'Affaires* at Tangier as saying that: "The sudden decision of the French Government to march upon Fez has caused him the greater surprise, since he has continually advised that local troops would suffice to regulate a

situation which the Paris newspapers seem to rival one another in exaggerating." The Belgian Consul goes on to say that although Fez is shut off, "letters are being received from there, the insurgent tribes have no artillery to use against its walls, and that the city is safe from attack." He continues :

The letters sent by the Italian military mission at Fez to the Italian Government are merely a narrative of trifling combats. No allusion is made in them to the possibility of trouble in the interior of the city or to the peril of the European colony, which consists of 50 persons, among whom are 18 French officers. The life and interests of foreigners are not, therefore, threatened.

Reporting on May 5, he says :

The column of Moroccan troops under the command of the French Commandant Bremond has just entered Fez, 2,500 strong, after having undergone innumerable perils according to the French version. As a matter of fact it reached the capital with only 30 of its members missing—in all probability merely deserters. And yet it is to its help that the troops which are being gathered together in the Shawiya are marching. Outside French circles, whose interest it is to depict the situation as desperate, no one here is anxious about the lot of the Europeans in Fez. . . . Should any danger threaten Europeans later it must be attributed to the march of the relief columns.

(Further official Belgian documents : Vol. 3 "Zur Europäischen Politik," 1897-1914. Berlin : Reimar Hobbing.)

Note that when questioned by Mr. John Dillon in the House on May 2 as to whether the British Government "had in any way approved or made itself responsible for this attack on the independence of the Empire of Morocco," Sir E. Grey replied that "The action taken by France is *not intended to alter the political status of Morocco*, and H.M. Government cannot see why any objection should be taken to it."

<sup>26</sup> Spain feared that French military action, taken without consulting her, and, therefore, in violation of her secret Treaty with France (and Britain) of October, 1904, foreshadowed a determination on the part of France to oust her from her rights under that Treaty. (See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," *op. cit.*)

<sup>27</sup> Column of Moorish troops under French officers.

<sup>28</sup> *The secret clauses of which the British people were still in ignorance!* Such is diplomacy! Plain men would call it by another name.

<sup>29</sup> See Note 24.

<sup>30</sup> See Note 19.

<sup>31</sup> See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy" (*op. cit.*). Also this despatch of the Belgian Consul at Tangier dated April 15, 1911 :

France had advanced 10 million francs to the Sultan to enable him to create the nucleus of an army with French officers. This loan, reimbursable by annuities of one million francs, will delay for several years the evacuation of Casablanca, which, theoretically, was to take place in 75 years. On the other hand, the external policy of the Empire is in the hands of the French Cabinet. . . . Have also been entirely Frenchified the Customs, the public works, the loan services, the telegraph office, the lighthouses and the exploitation of the mines.

<sup>32</sup> i.e., the naval scare of 1909. When, in 1912, Mr. Churchill became First Lord, he said, speaking of the German naval law and

of the explanation given of it by the German Chancellor in 1909 (which the Government had treated as an invention) :

Hitherto that law, as fixed by Parliament, has not been in any way exceeded, and I gladly bear witness to the fact that the statements of the German Ministers about it have been strictly borne out by events.

Thus were the falsehoods of two years in connection with the alleged "accelerative scheme" of the German Navy Law dissipated into thin air, after having wrought havoc in the relations of the two countries.

<sup>33</sup> The relations between France and Spain had by that time become very strained. (See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy.")

<sup>34</sup> For the relations of the Young Turks with Albania see "Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle," by Miss Durham; and "Albania: Past and Present," by Chekrezi (Macmillan).

<sup>35</sup> There appear to have been desultory conversations.

<sup>36</sup> The "Panther" anchored off Agadir on July 3, 1911. She was a small gunboat of 1,000 tons burthen, carried two guns of 10.5 calibre, six machine-guns and 125 men.

<sup>37</sup> The allusion is to the strip of Belgian territory on the eastern confines of the Belgian Congo through which the Cape to Cairo railway would have to obtain right of way to effect its eventual junction

<sup>38</sup> The Belgian diplomatist took his information about Agadir from the French Press. The idea of a permanent occupation of Agadir was as great a myth as the "peril" of Europeans in Fez. The coast at Agadir is virtually inaccessible. There is no harbour, and to have constructed one on that portion of the coast, swept by the Atlantic rollers, would have cost a fabulous sum. M. Caillaux states in his "Agadir" (Paris, Albin Michel, 1920) that M. Rouvier, Premier in 1905, offered Germany Mogador (a good port) and its hinterland, and that Germany declined: an additional proof that Germany's attitude in the Morocco affair was not dictated by territorial ambitions.

<sup>39</sup> M. Etienne was "in" all these "colonial" undertakings. He was the active spirit in the French Colonial Party who did much to rush France into her aggressive Morocco policy.

<sup>40</sup> That was inaccurate. M. de Selves, a highly incompetent person, with no previous experience, was on the bellicose side.

<sup>41</sup> There was far more equanimity in Paris than in London. (See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," *op. cit.*)

<sup>42</sup> See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," *op. cit.*

<sup>43</sup> These were, of course, *not* known to the House. The Secret Clauses to the 1904 Agreement and the terms of the Secret Franco-Spanish Treaty of the same year had not been disclosed. See Note 28.

<sup>44</sup> See Note 38.

<sup>45</sup> German Foreign Office.

<sup>46</sup> This provocative speech was virtually a threat of war. It roused the utmost indignation in Germany, and gave the reactionary element additional strength. The speech was utterly unjustifiable. See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," *op. cit.*

<sup>47</sup> This was one of the most wicked things ever done in the history of journalism. For the text of the *Times* article and leader see "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," *op. cit.*

<sup>48</sup> See Note 46.

<sup>49</sup> See Note 47.

<sup>50</sup> See Note 46. The passage had the previous approval of Mr. Asquith and Sir E. Grey.

<sup>51</sup> M. Caillaux has a remarkable passage in his volume, *op. cit.* See Note 38. Commenting upon the "great assistance in the diplomatic struggle" which France will derive from Lloyd George's speech, he adds:

But are we to understand that our powerful neighbours will go right through to the end with the resolve which they suggest? Are they ready for all eventualities? The British Ambassador, Sir Francis Bertie, with whom I converse, does not give me formal assurances. It is said, of course (*on dit bien*) that he would see without displeasure an outbreak of a conflict between France and Germany: his mind works in the way attributed to a number of leading British officials at the Foreign Office. Anxious at German development, they contemplate with complacency a European war in which they reckon that Britain will take part. (*Italics mine.*)

Compare this statement of the French Premier with the statements of a similar character by the Belgian diplomatists, which are scattered throughout this volume. It is only fair to state, however, that M. Caillaux goes on to draw a distinction between the permanent officials at the Foreign Office (of whose "considerable influence" on the British Government he, nevertheless, declares himself to be aware), and the Government itself, especially in view of the fact that the House of Commons contains "a radical majority inspired by very different sentiments." According to M. Caillaux, the British Government did not reply categorically to M. de Selves's inquiries as to what Britain would do if the Germans landed a force at Agadir. Sir E. Grey's messages, as reported by M. Caillaux (whose book is a defence against the charge of his enemies of not having taken a sufficiently strong stand against Germany over the Morocco crisis) were of a kind to damp down precipitate action on the part of the French. Their tone is extraordinarily different to the tone he adopted towards the German Ambassador and to the tone of Mr. Lloyd George's speech on July 21. It is interesting to note that these messages are all of a later date than the Lloyd George speech. The facts I believe to be that when the crisis first arose the Foreign Office was for going extreme lengths—as indicated by the Lloyd George speech—but that strong opposition, led by Lord Morley, developed within the Cabinet.

<sup>52</sup> See Note 51.

<sup>53</sup> This information is substantially accurate.

<sup>54</sup> See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," *op. cit.*

<sup>55</sup> It should always be remembered that the House and country knew nothing of the collaboration of the two General Staffs which had been going on uninterruptedly since 1906!

<sup>56</sup> *Vide* the Peace Treaty of Versailles!

<sup>57</sup> See Note 55.

<sup>58</sup> See "The Black Man's Burden," by E. D. Morel (p. 97).

<sup>59</sup> See Note 58.

<sup>60</sup> The era of Treaty destruction began with the violation of the Act of Algeciras by France with British support; the violation of the Treaty of Berlin by Austria in the matter of Bosnia followed, and was succeeded by its further violation in the matter of Tripoli by Italy.

<sup>61</sup> The Secret Clauses of the Anglo-French 1904 Convention and the Secret Franco-Spanish Treaty saw the light for the first time this month—in the columns of two French newspapers!

<sup>62</sup> Prince Lichnowsky states in his famous Memorandum that the British Government proposed to "include" the Congo State in its General Colonial Agreement with Germany, which was being negotiated in 1912-13, "which," he says, "would have given us the right of pre-emption (over the Congo), and enabled us to penetrate it economically." M. Hymans, the well-known Belgian Socialist, told the writer of this book that some such scheme as this figured in the instructions which Lord Haldane took over with him to Berlin in the spring of 1912. But Hymans averred that it went a good deal further than the words of Lichnowsky suggest.

<sup>63</sup> See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," *op. cit.*

<sup>64</sup> See Note 7, Part II.

<sup>65</sup> See Note 11.

<sup>66</sup> See "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy," *op. cit.*

<sup>67</sup> They *had* contracted them.

## PART VII.

[1912—1913.]

Mutual attempts to improve Anglo-German Relations—  
The Haldane Mission to Berlin—The Balkan Wars—  
Their Effect on the Group System of European  
Relationships—Dangerous Franco-German Friction  
—Growth of French Chauvinism Under Poincaré's  
Presidency—Increase in German Armaments, and  
the Three Years' Military Service Law in France—  
Moving Towards a Catastrophe.

## PART VII.

### Chronology of Principal Events in 1912-1913.

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1912.  
Raymond Poincaré Prime Minister of France .....*January.*  
Revulsion of feeling in Britain, especially among Liberals,  
against attitude of British diplomacy in the Morocco crisis of 1911.  
*For the greater part of the year.*
- Lord Haldane, Secretary of State for War, goes on an official  
mission to Berlin ..... *February 8-12.*
- Mr. Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, describes  
the German Navy as a "luxury" .....*February 9.*
- Mr. Asquith, Prime Minister, referring in the House to Lord  
Haldane's mission, declares that "in the course of my noble  
friend's visit there was unmistakable evidence of a sincere and  
resolute desire upon both sides to establish a better footing between  
us, without—let me make this perfectly clear—without, on either  
side, in any way sacrificing or impairing the special relationships  
in which each of us stands to other Powers" .....*February 14.*
- Negotiations between France and Russia for a Naval Con-  
vention (secret) .....*February.*
- Conclusion of the Balkan League, the first step being the  
Treaty between Serbia and Bulgaria under Russian auspices, and  
through the instrumentality of M. de Hartwig, Russia's Minister  
at Belgrade, providing for a division of spoils in the event of a  
successful war with Turkey, and foreshadowing Russian support  
in a war with Austria. (Montenegro and Greece subsequently join.)  
Treaty first published (in part) in November, 1913 .....*February.*
- King Nikola of Montenegro goes to Petrograd .....*February.*
- New German Naval Law .....*April.*
- Albanian rising against Turkey .....*April.*
- Turkey recognises Albanian autonomy .....*May.*
- Meeting of Asquith, Churchill and Kitchener at Malta in  
regard to British and French naval dispositions .....*May.*
- British Atlantic Fleet withdrawn to home waters .....*June.*
- Mr. Churchill informs the House that the strategic change in  
the disposition of the British Fleet has been made "in conjunction  
with the Navy of France" .....*July.*
- New German Ambassador to Britain .....*July.*
- Mr. Asquith declares that "our relations with the great  
German Empire are; I am glad to say, at this moment, and are  
likely to remain—relations of amity and goodwill" .....*July.*

The members of the (now) fully formed Balkan League, having secretly parcelled out Albania among themselves in their Treaties of Alliance, send an *ultimatum* to Turkey demanding that autonomy similar to that granted to Albania shall be given to Macedonia.

July.

Russian and French diplomacy endeavours to curb the Balkan States ..... July-October.

Russian test mobilisation in Poland ..... August.

M. Poincaré goes to Petrograd. (He arrived on August 9, and attended military manoeuvres and reviews on a grand scale. Isvolsky left Munich, where he was spending his vacation, to join the French President, and remained with him during his stay in Russia. The visit seems to have been decided in May, the same month as the conference at Malta between Asquith, Churchill and Kitchener, when the decisions were taken as to the new disposition of the British and French Fleets. It was first announced in the course of that month in the *Echo de Paris* and *Le Temps*)... August.

Russia presses France to re-establish the Three Years' Military Service Law ..... August.

Franco-Russian (Secret) Naval Convention providing for preparation in time of peace for co-operation of the fleets in war. France agrees to concentrate her naval forces in the Eastern Mediterranean (Biserta) in order to support the Russian Navy in the Black Sea. (Revealed in 1918) ..... August.

Third French Naval Squadron transferred from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. Poincaré tells Isvolsky: "This decision has been made in agreement with England, and forms the further development and completion of the arrangement already made previously between the French and British Staffs." (See Churchill's statement under July) ..... August.

Poincaré informs Sazonov (Russian Foreign Minister) that in the event of Germany assisting Austria in a struggle in the Balkans through which Russia would be drawn in against Austria, France would not "hesitate for a moment to fulfil its obligations towards Russia." (Revealed in 1919) ..... September.

Isvolsky (Russian Ambassador in Paris) sees King George and Sir Edward Grey. Sir E. Grey assures Isvolsky of the fullest British support in the same event. Isvolsky reports to Sazonov. "Arising out of this, Grey, upon his own initiative, corroborated what I already knew from Poincaré—the existence of an agreement between France and Great Britain, according to which England undertook, in case of a war with Germany, not only to come to the assistance of France on the sea, but also on the Continent by landing troops." (Revealed in 1919) ..... September.

Lord Fisher to Lord Esher: "We shall have 16 British 'Dreadnoughts' with the 13½ inch gun before the Germans have one" ..... September 20.

Montenegro (one of the Balkan Allies) declares war on Turkey. The other Balkan Allies follow suit: King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, in a proclamation to his troops, foretells Russian intervention.

October 8.

Mr. Churchill "engrossed in preparations for war with Germany" (Rhnt) ..... October.

Lord Roberts makes an alarmist speech about Anglo-German relations ..... *October 22.*

M. Poincaré, speaking at Nancy, declares that "France does not want war, but is, nevertheless, not afraid of it." This speech is welcomed with great jubilation by the French Nationalist Press. (The Austrian Press characterises the speech as the "growling of distant thunder, heralding a terrible storm." The Russian papers were calling at this time for a Russian advance upon Constantinople) ..... *October 27.*

The Balkan Allies invade Albania. Austria and Italy intervene diplomatically, neither of them desiring that Serbia should obtain a political footing on the Adriatic ..... *November.*

Turks badly beaten ..... *November-December.*

Austrian Heir-Apparent visits Berlin. The Kaiser advises against military action .. ..... *November.*

Russian and French diplomacy exercised in favour of the Balkan Allies ..... *November.*

Poincaré renews his September assurances to Isvolsky, and informs the Italian Ambassador in Paris to the same effect. Sazonov telegraphs to Isvolsky: "We are very thankful to Poincaré that he has declared to the Italian Ambassador that France is ready to support us." (Revealed in 1919) ..... *November.*

Exchange of letters (secret) between Sir E. Grey and M. Cambon, the French Ambassador, relating to the co-operation of the two countries in war. (Revealed in August, 1914).

*November 22-23.*

Conference of Ambassadors in London. Russia and France join in reluctantly and oppose recognition of Albanian autonomy demanded by Austria (with German support) and Italy.

*December 17.*

Sazonov urges Serbia to bide her time in order to "deliver a blow at Austria" ..... *December.*

Albanian autonomy accepted in principle by Ambassadors' Conference with a proviso giving Serbia commercial access to the Adriatic ..... *December 30.*

*1913.*

Poincaré President of the French Republic. Recalls Louis, French pacific Ambassador to Russia ..... *January.*

Great Russian military preparations ..... *Throughout year.*

M. Delcassé appointed French Ambassador to Russia *February.*

Russian Ambassador in London, reporting to Sazanov, reports that from his conversations with M. Cambon (French Ambassador in London) France is quite prepared to accept war. (Revealed in 1919) ..... *February 25.*

Belgian Minister in Paris sends repeated warnings of the growth of French Chauvinism ..... *February-June.*

Mr. Asquith, replying to Lord Hugh Cecil, denies that Britain is under an "obligation arising owing to an assurance given by the Ministry in the course of diplomatic negotiations to send a very large armed force out of this country to operate in Europe."

*March 10.*

Similar denials by Mr. Asquith in reply to Sir William Byles and Mr. Joseph King ..... *March 24.*

Mr. Runciman, President of the Board of Agriculture, speaking at Birkenhead in support of E. D. Morel's candidature, denies "in the most categorical way" the existence of a "secret understanding" with any foreign Power ..... *April 14.*

Great campaign in France in favour of the Three Years' Military Service Law, passionately supported by the Northcliffe Press.  
*All the spring and summer*

German estimates for a very large increase in German Army introduced into the Reichstag. (Ultimate peace strength fixed at 870,000) ..... *April 8.*

Treaty of London between Turkey and the Balkan States (not ratified) ..... *May.*

Mr. Harcourt, Colonial Secretary, declares publicly that he "could conceive no circumstances in which Continental operations would not be a crime against the people of this country" ... *May 3.*

Bulgaria attacks Serbia and Greece; is attacked by Rumania and defeated ..... *May-July.*

German Army estimates passed ..... *June.*

General Joffre, Generalissimo of the French Army, represents France at the Russian general manoeuvres ..... *June.*

Mr. Acland, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, declares publicly that "We were, of course, concerned in many European questions, but in no European question were we concerned to interfere with a big army" ..... *June 28.*

Lord Loreburn, Lord Chancellor from 1906 to 1912, declares : "That any British Government would be so guilty towards our country as to take up arms in a foreign quarrel is more than I can believe. To say so appears to me to be a duty, not less to ourselves than to foreign Powers" ..... *July.*

Austria sounds Italy and Germany as to joint action against Serbia, with negative results ..... *August.*

Treaty of Bukarest (between the former Balkan Allies, Rumania and Turkey) ..... *August 10*

Three Years' Military Service Law passes French Chamber.  
*August.*

Serbian atrocities in Albania ..... *Summer.*

*Times* Petrograd correspondent reports that by the changes in the Russian Army the peace footing will be 1,400,000. "By general consent the Russian Army has never been in better condition" ..... *September.*

Mr. Churchill (First Lord of the Admiralty) states, at the Guildhall, that "next year it would be his duty—if he should be responsible for this important Department of the State—to present to Parliament estimates substantially greater than the enormous sums voted in the present year" ..... *November 10.*

Irish situation increasing in danger ..... *All the year.*

Lord Haldane declares that "our relations with Germany were twice as good as they were two years ago" ..... *December.*

Despatch of a German military mission under General Liman von Sanders to Constantinople; great outcry in Russia ... *December.*

General unrest of working classes in Russia. (Serious strikes in Petrograd, Moscow, Riga and Baku) ..... *All the year.*

DESPATCHES FROM THE BELGIAN MINISTER  
IN LONDON, THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN  
BERLIN, THE NEW BELGIAN MINISTER IN  
BERLIN, AND THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN  
PARIS.

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**BRITAIN'S ATTITUDE ON THE MOROCCO  
QUESTION.**

No. 87.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *January 15, 1912.*

SIR,

The revelations that provoked the recent ministerial crisis in France have been disagreeable for the English Government. They seem to prove that the French Premier had been trying to negotiate with Berlin without the knowledge of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and his other colleagues, and this is naturally disquieting to a Government whose interests are bound up with those of France, and which accordingly can ill-tolerate any lapses of this kind. These revelations have also strengthened the impression that M. Caillaux had secretly favoured an ultra-conciliatory policy towards Germany, and this impression was felt all the more painfully in English official circles, as the full extent of the tension between London and Berlin caused by the Cabinet of St. James' loyal behaviour towards the Cabinet at Paris had hardly been grasped. People in England are reluctant to face the fact that they have been "more royalist than the King," and have shown themselves even less accommodating than the friend they were backing.<sup>1</sup>

It is not pleasant to have been taken in, even for a moment. Accordingly the press unanimously hails with delight the departure of M. Caillaux, and trusts that sounder traditions may be reverted to without delay,

although there are papers which remind their readers ironically that it was to support a government like this that Great Britain took up a position that might have involved war; and they conclude that Sir Edward Grey was lacking in perspicacity. These events will be exploited by all those writers (and their numbers are on the increase) who cast doubt on the value of the entente cordiale. The *Fortnightly* and *Contemporary Review* have already published articles to this effect in their latest issues. It will provide fresh arguments for all that little clique of publicists who are doing their best to prove that England, without breaking with France, might with advantage to herself be on more friendly terms with Germany. According to these people the original idea of the entente has been twisted by the present Cabinet, and an arrangement whose only object was to put an end to the old policy of pin-pricks between London and Paris by settling once for all a number of minor but irritating points, has been interpreted as involving fixed contracts and hard and fast obligations.

The entente was not an alliance. It was only intended to dispel certain clouds of a quite definite character. The mistake made by Mr. Asquith's Government was to treat it as being practically an alliance, with the result that serious enmity to Great Britain has been created in Berlin.

The composition of the new Poincaré Cabinet has been favourably received here.

Believe me to be, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## LORD HALDANE'S MISSION TO BERLIN.

No. 88.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *February 9, 1912.*

SIR,

Curiosity has been aroused by the visit of Lord Haldane, the head of the War Office, to Berlin. The Press is inventing all sorts of explanations to account for this journey, which followed the day after a Cabinet Council, and on the eve of the opening of Parliament. It is suggested he went either:

(1) To discuss an exchange of information about English and German armaments.

(2) To request the pardon of an English spy called Stewart, upon whom sentence was recently passed in Germany.

(3) To work for an Anglo-German entente.

(4) To go into the question of altering certain African boundaries, etc.

(5) Of a partition of the Portuguese Colonies.

(6) Of the cession to Germany of Walfish Bay.

(7) On a personal mission to the Kaiser from King George.

What is quite certain is that the object in view is a pacific one. At all costs it is desired to lessen the tension that now prevails between the two countries.<sup>2</sup> This is the actual policy of the Cabinet, and, of all the Ministers of the Crown the Minister for War is the most pro-German. Lord Haldane was a Heidelberg student in his day, and he talks well the language with which so few English are familiar. He has also personal friends in Berlin. In this respect his selection as an envoy is another indication of the tendency of the official mission. Of all the hypotheses, the most probable is that of a friendly conversation in which some common ground of good understanding shall be sought for, and stress laid on the deplorable expenditure in which both nations are involved by their programmes of naval construction. England is ready to cease thwarting Germany in minor matters; only she will brook no rival as mistress of the seas.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## BRITISH RADICALS AND SIR EDWARD GREY.

No. 89.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *February 13, 1912.*

SIR,

It is interesting to note how unpopular Sir Edward Grey has become with the extremists of his own party. I have already had occasion to mention Morel's criticisms

of him in the *Daily News*, a Radical and anti-Congo daily of Socialistic leanings.<sup>3</sup> This same paper (which is the organ of the Nonconformists, and connected with the pacifist group) published the day before yesterday a diatribe against the Secretary for the Foreign Office, of whose policy they highly disapprove. The *Daily News* expresses the opinion that by his weakness in his dealings with Russia, and from fear of annoying the Government of St. Petersburg, and throwing it into the arms of Germany, Sir Edward Grey is contributing to the approaching partition of China and Persia. It reminds its readers that the British Government, when renewing the Anglo-Japanese alliance of July 23, 1911, declared its intention of maintaining the independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire and the principle of the open door; and that, by the Anglo-Russian agreement of August 31, 1907, England pledged herself to respect the integrity and independence of Persia. The *Daily News* remarks that current events are showing what little importance can be attached to the promises of the head of the Foreign Office, and says that Sir Edward Grey has made himself impossible.

Taking as its text a speech by Lord Rosebery at Glasgow, in which the ex-Foreign Secretary criticises Great Britain's policy abroad, with all that dovetailing of Ententes which entails such heavy responsibilities; the same paper continues to-day its attack upon Sir Edward Grey. It deplores the result of the Foreign Secretary's policy in elaborating a triple Entente against the Triple Alliance and in seeking to cripple Germany's expansion, which brought the country last year within a hair's breadth of war. This policy (it says) will logically involve Great Britain not only in an increase of the Navy, but in the adoption of compulsory military service. Accordingly the *Daily News* calls for Sir Edward Grey's resignation.

One must not, however, forget that this paper only represents a small section—though a noisy one—of the Radical party. The Left Wing as a whole is loyal to the Secretary of the Foreign Office, who enjoys great respect in the House of Commons, and has many admirers even among the Opposition Benches.<sup>4</sup>

Believe me,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

**LORD HALDANE'S MISSION TO BERLIN.**

No. 90.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *February 16, 1912.*

SIR,

The Prime Minister, in the course of the debate on the Reply to the Speech from the Throne, took occasion to throw some light on the Secretary for War's recent visit to Berlin.

In my report of the 9th instant, I told you that of all the hypotheses that had been suggested the most probable was that of a friendly conversation with the object of discovering some common ground and lessening the existing tension.

Mr. Asquith's speech confirms this impression. He admitted that during the last few months the traditional friendship between the two countries had undergone some severe shocks, owing to suspicions on both sides.

The German public had even gone so far as to imagine that the British Navy was planning an attack upon the German squadrons during the summer and autumn of 1911. It was a pure invention. Both Governments honestly desire to arrive at a better understanding, and the Berlin Cabinet hinted to London that this common aim might be more easily achieved by the visit of an English Minister to Germany.

This may not be in accordance with diplomatic usage, but it has given rise to some timely and frank explanations calculated to do away with the impressions that the two Governments have aggressive intentions. Mr. Asquith believes that his colleague's conversations in Berlin may lead to other fortunate results hereafter. What these may be, he did not say.

The Prime Minister was careful to add that, although both nations desire to be upon a more friendly footing, there can be no question of any change whatever in the special relationships in which they respectively stand towards other Powers. For the moment the two Governments are simply examining possibilities.

Mr. Asquith said nothing about the Navy. You will have noticed, however, that whilst the head of the War

Office was in Berlin, Mr. Winston Churchill, Secretary for the Admiralty, made a speech at Glasgow in which he once more affirmed Great Britain's determination to maintain her naval supremacy at all costs.

He even made use of a rather unlucky phrase, which produced a bad effect in Germany, when he said that a powerful Navy was a necessity for England, but only a luxury for Germany.<sup>5</sup>

What common ground of understanding can be found? A process of elimination would seem to show that it must be sought in a delimitation of the various spheres of political and economic interests. Let us hope that it will not be at the expense of other States too weak to raise opposition.

The Marquis of Crewe, speaking in the House of Lords, took the same line as Mr. Asquith.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## GERMAN ARMY AND NAVY INCREASES.

No. 91.

BARON GREINDL, Belgian Minister in Berlin; to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *April 26, 1912.*

SIR,

The Reichstag began last Monday and ended yesterday the first reading of the Bill for the increases in the Army and the Navy, and for raising sums to meet the new military expenses by abolishing the privilege of agricultural breweries. I had the honour to communicate to you the text of this Bill in my reports of April 17 and 18.

The three proposals had been put down together in the orders for the day. The Reichstag separated them, and voted by 160 to 158 Herr Bassemann's resolution referring the question of distilleries to a special committee. It was a snap vote, seeing that 79 members were absent. Still it registers a success for the united Left Parties over the Conservatives and Centre together. The defeat is all the worse for the Conservatives because the debate in Committee will give an opportunity for demanding the omission of those clauses in the Bill which are inserted in order to console their friends, the landed brewers, for the loss of

that reduction of taxation which they at present enjoy, and which would also raise the whole question of the Brandy-Revenue Act of 1909, which has given rise to many complaints.

However, whatever may be the fate of this proposal, it cannot jeopardise the Bill for the increases in the Army and Navy. All the middle-class parties agree in regarding these as necessary, and this consensus of opinion has made the Reichstag debates somewhat dull. The Chancellor, in his opening speech, sought to show that the Government proposals are not inspired by any sort of motive of aggression or provocation. The other speakers all followed Bethmann-Hollweg's lead. They talked round the subject, scarcely touching on the real cause which is forcing Germany to develop still further her formidable military preparations, and that is the alarming state of the relations between the Great Powers, arising from national hatreds, from Italy's act of folly, and from the ferment in the Balkans.<sup>6</sup>

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GREINDL.

## THE NEW GERMAN AMBASSADOR IN LONDON AND ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 92.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *June 28, 1912.*

SIR,

Will Baron von Marschall, in the course of his mission to London, succeed in bringing about a better understanding between the German and British Governments? Undoubtedly no one desires it more than the Emperor, and it is only doing justice to His Majesty to testify that he rarely neglects an opportunity of saying in public something courteous or complimentary about the English. The recent Regatta at Kiel has twice afforded him an excuse for eulogising the British Navy. Nor does the Emperor allow himself to be discouraged by the disappointment he experiences at the hands of his friends of Great Britain. I have been told here that, after the death of Edward VII., when he and the Crown Prince

came back from England, where they had been very politely received, both of them were convinced that the frigid terms on which the two Courts had stood for years past were about to be replaced by cordial intimacy, and that the causes of misunderstanding between the two nations would become a thing of the past. The Emperor must, therefore, have been painfully surprised last year at seeing the British Cabinet take sides with such decision in favour of France. However, the Emperor is persistent, and has not given up hopes of winning back English sympathies, just as she has succeeded up to a certain point in obtaining the confidence of the Tsar, by the force of his personal attractions. Being unable to act in London for himself, he has chosen the most distinguished of German diplomatists for this thankless task.

The English Ambassador seemed to me somewhat sceptical as to the success of this mission. "What makes it so difficult—said Sir E. Goschen to me—to restore the good understanding of bygone days is that there is no actual concrete subject of friction or estrangement between the two nations. No awkward incident such as that of Fashoda has required to be settled between us and Germany. The misunderstanding dates from the Kaiser's telegram to President Kruger. It was like a flash of light revealing the gulf that has silently opened between us and the German nation unawares. The question of the limitation of the German Navy is an insoluble one. We have no right whatever to dictate to the Imperial Government. We can only follow it along the ruinous course in which it is engaged; for England's safety depends on her supremacy at sea." The Ambassador, like Mr. Winston Churchill, believes that the German Navy is the darling child of the Emperor's own creation, that he delights in seeing it grow, and that he will not stop short at making it more powerful than is necessary for the defence of German commerce.

Sir Edward Goschen omitted to mention another cause of English aversion to the Germans, one that is perhaps more deeply seated; I mean their industrial and commercial rivalry. It is natural that England should feel jealous at the sight of a Continental nation gaining ground each year in the economic struggle, and endangering her established superiority in that field too. German goods, albeit still inferior in quality, tend to hold the field against similar English articles, the price of which has not fallen.

The stamp "Made in Germany," enforced by the British Government, has had, as a consequence, it would seem, a tendency to make German wares more popular than the home product in the British Colonies, where their comparative cheapness is a great attraction.

Baron von Marschall is a very clever business man; at least, so it is said by those diplomatists who know him. He studies a diplomatic problem as a lawyer gets up a case. Far from confining himself to mingling with the best society and in political circles, he neglects no source of information and interrogates journalists whilst appearing to let them interview him. He is the brilliant representative of a new school. The Turkish Ambassador told me that at Constantinople, after 1908, it looked as though his position and reputation were both gone, but he promptly re-established them by turning the blunders of his antagonists—the French and English Ambassadors—to his own advantage.<sup>8</sup> In London he will no doubt coolly examine the moral and economic causes of the misunderstanding between the two Governments and their peoples. Will he discover a basis for a political entente? It seems more than doubtful, but a temporary relaxation of tension is not impossible. In any case, the task is in good hands, and the craftsman will not spoil the result by over-great haste and self-assurance.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) BEYENS.

## FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 93.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *Oct. 18, 1912.*

SIR,

Relations between France and Germany did not grow any better in the course of last summer. Several incidents contributed to maintain and even increase the bitterness between these two neighbouring nations, *e.g.*, the campaign started in a section of the German press about the concentration of the French Fleet in the Mediterranean,<sup>9</sup> and, on the other side, certain episodes that had to be explained in the Wilhelmstrasse, such as General

d'Amade's speech and the treatment of Princess Colloredo's motor car by the populace at Nancy, when a German flag was torn from it and stamped upon. Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter did not seem to attach any importance to this ill-feeling, but M. Cambon, whose business it was to smooth over each difficulty as it arose, was much exercised by their frequency and by the condition of strain resulting therefrom.

The first effect of the Balkan crisis has been to bring about a *rapprochement* between the Imperial and Republican Governments. Both alike are anxious to see the quarrel confined to the Balkan Peninsula and to avoid a European war, and are at one in seeking to influence their respective Allies, Russia and Austria, in this direction, and both took part at the same moment in the somewhat belated efforts that were made at Constantinople and the various capitals of the Balkan States. The initiative taken by M. Poincaré personally with the view of restoring peace was approved, and even praised, by the German press, although they thought him premature in proposing a Conference. Finally, Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter's praises were sung by the *Matin*, if one can so describe the article which was dedicated to him in that paper.

It was not the fault of the Imperial Government that the crisis caused in 1909 by the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina did not close more satisfactorily. The German Government suggested to the Paris Cabinet that simultaneous pressure should be brought to bear at Petersburg in order to induce Russia to change her attitude. M. Pichon having declined this co-operation, the Berlin Cabinet took its well-known step. I think it is desirable that the truth as to this historic point should be brought to light. I only recently learnt it at the French Embassy.<sup>10</sup>

Moreover, it was natural that public attention and interest on both sides of the Vosges should be diverted from the usual fields of discussion and polemics, and become concentrated on events in the Balkans. I do not wish to exaggerate the extent of this improvement; but still one may hope that the community of views brought about in Germany and France by present events will be a powerful factor in the restoration of peace.

Believe me to remain, etc.,

(Signed) BEYENS.

## RUSSIA'S BALKAN POLICY.

No. 94.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, Oct. 24, 1912.

SIR,

Ever since the Allied Sovereigns, in their manifestos, definitely gave to the war on which they are jointly engaged the character of a crusade against the enemy of their faith, against the Asiatic conqueror, who for nearly five centuries has been oppressing Christian lands, the German Press, whose sentiments in matters of religion are usually very broadminded, has been more and more inclining to the side of the Turks. As I had the honour to write to you on the 21st instant, the worst possible impression has been produced here by the allusions, which were greatly lacking in tact, to the eventual intervention of Russia, made by the Bulgarian Tsar in his proclamation to his troops.

It is thought, indeed, and not without reason, that the Pan-Slavic sentiments of the Russian people do not need to be excited. It is feared, lest at a given moment, if the fate of the war turns either against, or too much in favour of, the Allies, these sentiments may burst all the bounds within which the Tsar's Government seeks to confine them, and that M. Sazonov and his policy of *entente* towards the other Powers may both go down together.

The French Ambassador, who must have special reasons for saying so, has told me on several occasions that the greatest danger to the maintenance of European peace lies in the lack of discipline and in the personal policy that characterises the action of the Russian agents abroad.<sup>11</sup> They are nearly all ardent Pan-Slavists, and it is they who are in great measure to blame for the present occurrences. There can be no doubt that they will make themselves secret agents for Russian intervention in the Balkan struggle.

M. Sazonov's policy is all the wiser because present events have surprised Russia while she was engaged in a thorough re-organisation of her military forces, and a failure or even a mere set-back in Europe would be a much worse disaster for her than her defeats in the Far East.<sup>12</sup>

It would be the signal for a social revolution, which is already arming itself in the shade and silently threatening the throne of the Tsars. If one compares the slight personal advantage which Russia might derive by intervening with the risks that she should run, one might rely upon the good sense of her rulers, and view the immediate future with some security, were it not for the Pan-Slavic movement and those who feed its flames.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) BEYENS.

### ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 95.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *October 31st, 1912.*

SIR,

One of the many conferences organised by the Society for an Anglo-German Understanding took place yesterday at the Guildhall. The former Ambassador at Berlin, Sir Frank Lascelles, took the chair; and he, and the Lord Mayor and Lord Avebury, held out the olive branch. Count Leyden, Dr. Schuster, and Professor Rathgen made pacific speeches. Complimentary phrases were exchanged about the Anglo-Saxon race, the ties of blood, the horrors of war which both nations dread, common trade interests and the mutual need of a better understanding.<sup>13</sup>

Unfortunately, at a meeting last week, Field-Marshal Lord Roberts had made a bellicose speech which attracted much attention. Lord Roberts is known to advocate universal military service, to be critical of the state of the army, and to desire to arouse a more martial spirit in the nation. This veteran warrior has a way of speaking his mind, to the despair of the pacifists. He never ceases to foretell the downfall and final ruin of England, unless she reorganises her military system; and he is not afraid to dot his i's. In solemn and prophetic accents, he declared that Germany was only waiting for the moment when her naval armaments were completed to attack Great Britain. The German Empire, he said, aims at nothing less than the supremacy by land and sea. He went on to criticise

the actual state of the British Army, which is not prepared. As for the territorial troops, they were, he said, too few, undisciplined, ill-equipped and slack.<sup>14</sup>

This jeremiad has created a sensation. The Government, being responsible for the creation of the territorial army, was keenly annoyed. The Foreign Office was alarmed at the possible effects of this speech in Berlin. Questions were asked in the House, and Sir Edward Grey said that it was much to be regretted that personages in both countries who exercise no political influence on their respective Governments should allow themselves to make attacks of this kind.

The mischief, however, had been done: and this speech will help to convince timid folks that Germany is most certainly plotting war against her rival in the North Sea, and even that the blow may fall soon.

It was under these—to say the least—unpromising circumstances that the conference for an Anglo-German Understanding met. Lord Roberts is only an old man playing the part of *enfant terrible*; but he regards it as his mission to open the nation's eyes, and his popularity serves instead of arguments with the masses. The honeyed phrases uttered at the Guildhall yesterday are not of a sort to efface the Field-Marshal's diatribes from the public mind; and these diatribes keep up an atmosphere of chronic suspicion which infects public opinion.<sup>15</sup>

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## GERMANY'S MODERATING INFLUENCE UPON AUSTRIA.

No. 96.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, November 30, 1912.

SIR,

In view of the Balkan war and the conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia, the visit of the hereditary Archduke of Austria to Germany has been of special importance, although its ostensible object was merely a hunting trip undertaken at the Kaiser's invitation.<sup>16</sup> The Archduke said at Berlin that the Austro-Hungarian

Monarchy had reached the limit of the concessions that she could make to her neighbour. None the less the Emperor and his advisers overwhelmed him with counsels of moderation, summed up by William II. with his usual familiarity of speech as he was escorting his guest to the station in the words "Above all, don't do anything foolish!" (*Surtout, pas de bêtises.*) On the word of the Ambassador who told it to me, I can guarantee the authenticity of this piece of advice which has escaped journalistic indiscretion.<sup>17</sup>

A few days after Franz Ferdinand's departure, the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* published the official *communiqué* that you have seen, which was drafted in the Wilhelmstrasse and designed to reassure people who had been alarmed by the rumour of the Austrian military preparations. *There is no doubt that the Emperor, the Chancellor, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs are passionately pacifists.* The article in the *Norddeutsche* aroused some discontent at the Court of Vienna. The Hereditary Archduke was not expecting such very plain speaking on Germany's part just after his visit, and he complained of it here. Whatever plans Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter may have in his head (and he has big ideas) for winning the sympathies of the young Balkan Powers over to Germany one thing is absolutely certain, and that is that he is rigidly determined to avoid a European conflagration. On this point the policy of Germany is similar to that of England and France, both of which countries are determinedly pacifist. Subjects of contention may continue to crop up daily in the Paris and Berlin Press; but the Berlin papers have adopted a much more conciliatory tone with regard to Great Britain, and to Sir Edward Grey in particular. The German and British Governments are on better terms than they have been for a long time past; and the French Ambassador assures me, too, that between the Cabinets of Berlin and Paris also, there is a lessening of friction which is very hopeful for the preservation of peace.<sup>18</sup>

To induce Austria to be more amenable—as the Imperial Government is believed here to have succeeded in doing—would not in itself be enough to appease the conflict. It will still be necessary to overcome Serbia's obstinacy to any decrease in her claims. Last week, a rumour was going round the European Legations that M. Sazonov had given up struggling against the Court party which is bent

on dragging Russia into war, although the Russian Empire is honeycombed with revolution, and her military preparations are still inadequate. But during the last two days, especially since the Tsar accorded a special audience to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, a feeling of confidence has succeeded to the depression of the past week. M. Sazonov appears to have pulled himself together, and is actively playing the same rôle at the Court of Belgrade that German diplomacy has undertaken at the Court of Vienna. Will Serbia's obstinacy yield to advice from Russia, and will she accept a compromise with regard to the port on the Adriatic? My colleagues, to whom I have put the question, reply in the affirmative. Now this is the very crux of the question.<sup>19</sup>

So the diplomatic world at Berlin is optimistic, as I have had occasion to hear since I returned. Nevertheless it still expects to receive from time to time very alarmist reports, which will be all the less deserving of credence because they will presumably be the work of the Turkish diplomatists, Hilmi Pasha and Nizam Pasha, who, like regular levantines as they are, have a wonderful talent for flying birds of ill-omen. Nizam Pasha, the Ambassador at Berlin, says openly that Turkey's defeat would set Europe in flames. He is doing his best to make his prophecy come true. His journey from Vienna to Bucharest was accompanied by a whole covey of false intelligence, which was eagerly snapped up by the newspapers.

Berlin favourably received the scheme for a Conference of Ambassadors, which should clear the ground and bring about a provisional agreement between the six great Powers on important questions, such as that of the *Ægean* Islands and Albania, with which the question of a Serbian Port on the Adriatic is inevitably associated.

Sir Edward Grey's idea falls in with the wishes of Herr von Kiderlen-Waechter, who has frequently complained that the process of exchanging views between the different Cabinets wastes valuable time and leads to no result.

If they could be got together in one Capital and the matter entrusted to expert diplomatists, no doubt some agreement would be realised that would facilitate the task of a Congress convened later on to settle questions that have arisen out of the present war. Since the proposal emanates from the British Government, it seems quite natural that the Ambassadors' Conference should meet in London. There is some talk, however, of Paris being

chosen. In Paris reside as Ambassadors men like MM. Tittoni and Isvolsky, who have played a militant part in the Foreign Policy of their country, and who accordingly suffer from the suspicion of pursuing a personal policy. On the other hand, Sir Francis Bertie, the English Ambassador, is of so combative a turn of mind that it cannot be hoped that he will refrain from amusing himself by setting his colleagues by the ears. Paris does not seem to be a very good place to choose for this gathering of diplomatists.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) BEYENS.

## M. POINCARÉ AS PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC.

No. 97.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *February 14, 1913.*

SIR,

The new President of the Republic enjoys a popularity in France to-day unknown to any of his predecessors. To mention only the last two Presidents—M. Loubet's election was very ill received by the public, and M. Fallières met with nothing but indifference.

M. Poincaré receives every day marks of popular sympathy. He is overwhelmed with invitations to banquets. His praises are sung in street corner ditties, and the mention of his name and his portrait, displayed at all the music halls and cinemas, evokes rounds of applause.

Great preparations are on foot to celebrate the day when he shall enter into his Presidential functions. The City of Paris is to give him a reception, and hundreds of Societies are petitioning for stands along the road when he goes in procession to the Hotel de Ville (Town Hall).

Various factors contribute to explain his popularity. His election had been cleverly prepared in advance; people are pleased at the skilful way in which, while a Minister, he manœuvred so as to bring France to the fore in the concert of Europe; he has hit on some happy phrases that stick in the popular mind. But above all one must regard it as a manifestation of the old French Chauvinist spirit, which had for many years slumbered, but which has come to life again since the affair of Agadir.<sup>20</sup>

M. Poincaré is a native of Lorraine, and loses no opportunity of telling people so. He was M. Millerand's colleague, and the instigator of his militarist policy.

Finally, the first word that he uttered at the very moment when he learned that he was elected President of the Republic, was a promise that he would watch over and maintain all the means of national defence.

In these circumstances, and thanks to his eminent qualities, he may render great services to his country, but he is too clever not to know that French public opinion is liable to frequent reactions, and that there is no country where the Capitol lies so close to the Tarpeian Rock.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 98.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *February 19, 1913.*

SIR,

I have just been seeing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who tells me that the international situation has undergone practically no change. The Bulgarian Army is making no appreciable progress, and the Ambassadors' Conference in London seems bogged, so to speak.

The Cabinet of Vienna is always very stiff-necked in all matters that affects its interests, and Russia has energetically espoused the cause of Serbia and Montenegro.

The six Great Powers have formally offered their mediation to settle the Bulgar-Roumanian dispute. This offer has received no reply up to the present. M. Jonnart regrets that in both countries the international question has been approached with an eye to consideration of domestic politics. King Charles was very sensible and prudent when the difficulties first arose; but it is to be feared that he may be swamped by the politicians of the Opposition. The Bulgarians are usually very stubborn in negotiation, and M. Danef is unmanageable under all circumstances.

The German Press professes to be astonished at the military measures which the French Government proposes.

to take in response to the increase in Germany's armaments. It could not be otherwise. We know very well,—said the Minister to me—what an advantage our neighbour has in the continual growth of his population; still, we must do all that lies in our power to compensate this advantage by better military organisation.

For all that, the papers—*Le Temps* in particular—are wrong in representing the French Government's plans as being in response to measures adopted by Germany. Many of them are but the outcome of measures which have long been prepared.

The Cabinet has not yet finally decided on the term of service. Will they go back to the Three Years' service for all sections of the army, or only for certain ones? M. Jennart knows nothing as yet, but he does not conceal his predilection for a Three Years' service for all sections. *The Minister does not regard the measures taken by Germany as a demonstration of hostility*, but rather as an act of prudence for the future. Germany fears that she may one day have to fight Russia and France together, perhaps England too; and then any help that Austria might give her would be seriously handicapped by the fact that the Dual Monarchy would have to withstand a coalition of Balkan States. The French Embassy at Berlin continues to be on unbroken and excellent terms with the Wilhelmstrasse.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## M. DELCASSÉ FOR PETROGRAD.

No. 99.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *February 21, 1913.*

SIR,

The news that M. Delcassé is shortly to be appointed Ambassador at St. Petersburg burst like a bomb here yesterday afternoon. The newspapers printed the report along with the text of the French President's message.<sup>21</sup>

Was the coincidence voluntary? Apparently it was. In any case it attracted considerable comment and had a depressing effect upon the Exchange.

M. Delcassé's personality is well known and stands for a great deal. He was one of the architects of the Franco-Russian alliance, and still more so, of the Anglo-French entente.

The circumstances of his forced departure from the Quai d'Orsay are in everybody's memory. After the lapse of some years when M. Delcassé became Head of the Admiralty, it was said in all quarters that his return to power was not looked upon with disfavour in Berlin, and the German Ambassador was loud in affirming the fact.

During the last month, the friends of the eminent statesman having gone about saying the same thing, on the chance that the Congress of Versailles after several failures to get him elected, might be willing to take him on as an outsider?<sup>22</sup> It was no secret to anyone that he himself wished it, but many politicians might have been afraid to choose him, lest his election might have the appearance of demonstrations against Germany.

Is the selection of the new Ambassador to St. Petersburg to be interpreted in this way? I do not think so; but I do think, however, that M. Poincaré, a Lorrainer, was not sorry to show, from the first day of entering on his high office, how anxious he is to stand firm and hold aloft the national flag.

That is the danger involved in having M. Poincaré at the Elysée in these anxious days through which Europe is passing. It was under his Ministry that the militarist, slightly bellicose, instincts of the French woke up again. He has been thought to have a measure of responsibility for this change of mood. It is to be hoped that his politic, practical, cold intellect will preserve him from proceeding to extremes in this direction. The notable development in Germany's armaments coinciding with M. Poincaré's presence at the Elysée, will increase the danger of France's policy of becoming too nationalistic in its tendencies.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## GERMAN ARMAMENTS AND BRITISH OPINION.

No. 100.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *February 24, 1913.*

SIR,

Political circles have been agitated, and the imagination of the public has been greatly struck, by the vast military schemes of Germany, and even more perhaps by France's very firm and prompt rejoinder. Both Governments are ready to make considerable financial sacrifices and appear to be backed by public opinion in both countries, where only the Socialists sound a discordant note.

The English Press is, of course, anxious to saddle Germany with the responsibility for the fresh tension caused by her schemes—a tension which may give Europe fresh reasons for uneasiness. In the opinion of many of the newspapers, the French Government, in declaring its readiness to re-enact the three years' service and in naming M. Delcassé to St. Petersburg has adopted the only attitude worthy of the great Republic in view of German provocation.<sup>23</sup>

At the Foreign Office I found a more equitable and calmer estimate of the situation. They see in the reinforcement of the German armies not so much a provocation as an admission that circumstances have weakened Germany's military position and that it must be strengthened. The Berlin Government is compelled to recognise that it can no longer count upon being supported by the whole forces of its Austrian ally, now that a new power—that of the Balkan Federation, has made its appearance in S.E. Europe, right at the gates of the Dual Empire.<sup>24</sup> Far from being able to reckon upon the full support of the Vienna Government in case of need, it is probably the latter who would require help from Germany. In case of a European war, Germany would have to hold her own against her enemies along both the Russian and the French frontiers, and possibly send some of her own troops to the assistance of the Austrian army.<sup>25</sup> Under these circumstances, the Foreign Office sees nothing astonishing in Germany's finding it imperative to increase the number of her Army Corps. The Foreign Office also states that

the Berlin Government had told the Paris Cabinet quite frankly that such were the motives for its action.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## GROWTH OF FRENCH CHAUVINISM.

No. 101.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *March 3, 1913.*

SIR,

On Saturday, the German Ambassador said to me:—  
“The political situation has greatly improved during the last 48 hours. There is an all round decrease in tension; a speedy restoration of peace is to be hoped for. But one thing has not improved, and that is the state of public opinion in France and Germany with respect to the relations between the two countries.

“On our side people are convinced that the spirit of chauvinism being aroused once more in France, a French attack is to be feared. In France they profess to have the same fear with regard to us. The result of these misunderstandings will be a common ruin. I do not know where this perilous path is going to lead us. Is there no man to be found who has sufficient good-will and sufficient prestige to appeal to the commonsense of all parties? The whole thing is the more absurd, because throughout the whole of the crisis through which we have been passing, both Governments have given evidence of the most peaceful sentiments and have intensely supported each other in order to avoid occasions of conflict.”<sup>26</sup>

Baron von Schoen is quite right. I am not in a good position to scrutinise public opinion in Germany, but I realise every day the growth of a feeling of suspicion and chauvinism in France.

Everybody you meet tells you that an early war with Germany is certain and inevitable.<sup>27</sup> It is regretted, but acquiesced in. People demand the immediate, one might say, the jubilant passage of any measure calculated to increase France's defensive strength. The most reasonable people maintain that France must arm herself to the teeth, in order to terrify her opponent and so prevent war.

M. Pichon, who is a man of experience and was for a long while Minister for Foreign Affairs, was urging this very thing quite lately at a meeting of a certain society. He said:—

“ We must work for the constant strengthening of our forces; in this lies one of the most effective guarantees of peace. Our diplomatic efforts would be in vain, unless our military power were feared and respected.

“ There must be no disturbance of the diplomatic balance in Europe. Neither must there be any disturbance of the military balance to the disadvantage of one of those nations which represents in the highest measure the pacific ideals of modern democracy. No burden must be too great for our patriotism once it is recognised to be necessary. We are not arming for war, we are arming to avoid it, to exorcise it. And we are only strengthening this army, of which we are proud, and on which our safety depends, just in so far as is necessary to guard against any possible surprise, and to discourage any inclination to provoke us.”

I met M. Pichon last night, and he repeated these very words to me: “ We must go on arming more and more in order to prevent war.”

He is convinced that the Chambers will enthusiastically vote the 500 millions which the Government ask for in order to perfect the nation's military machine. I had the honour to send you the preamble to the Bill with an analysis of its motives. M. Pichon has no doubt that, with a very few exceptions, it will be the same with the measures brought forward for an increase in the effectives. As to this point, opinions differ.

The whole Press, save for the Socialist organs and certain Radical Socialist papers, are demanding the 'Three Years' Service without exceptions. The Government have so far kept their own counsel as to the decisions that they intend to take. It is generally admitted that if the Government should, despite adverse electoral interests, rally round this Three Years' Service Bill, it will be carried, but not without opposition. Honourable Members are afraid of losing their seats.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## RUSSIAN DIPLOMACY IN THE BALKANS.

No. 102.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *March 18, 1913.*

SIR,

The unacceptable terms on which the Balkan States propose to conclude peace are explained by the certainty they feel that the Great Powers are quite unable to enforce their will.

From information which I have gleaned in the diplomatic world of Berlin, complete harmony appears to prevail in London amongst the Ambassadors who have been instructed to draft resolutions of the questions arising from the continuation of hostilities: but none of these gentlemen is authorised to draw up a protocol or to put so much as a comma down on paper, without the previous assent of his Government. The understanding between the different Powers, which it was thought too long and difficult to bring about by negotiations between the Cabinets, does not seem any easier to attain, now that recourse has been had to the expedient suggested by Sir E. Grey, and a meeting of accredited Ambassadors has been brought together in London as a kind of deliberative Council, with the mission of conciliating differences of opinion and preparing the ground for joint action by the Powers.

This is just where the difficulty of an understanding lies. The Powers can only realise their wishes by dint of bringing pressure to bear on the Balkan States. Up till now, there has been a lack of unanimity, directly the question arose of proceeding from words to deeds. This is known at Sofia, Belgrade, and Athens; and this inertia on the part of the Great Powers, which shewed itself after the first victories of the allied Balkan States, encourages the latter to adopt an arrogant and unapproachable attitude.

They are further encouraged in this attitude by the ambiguous attitude of Russia. The representatives of the Balkan States at Berlin no longer make any mystery of the close ties which have never ceased to exist between their Governments and the Cabinet of St. Petersburg.<sup>28</sup> The latter alone knew of the alliance which they had con-

cluded amongst themselves, and it was only when armed with St. Petersburg's approbation that they went ahead.<sup>29</sup>

Thus Russian diplomacy holds in leash, so to speak, the diplomacy of the allied Balkan States which receives the former's instructions and will execute its orders.<sup>30</sup> But Russian diplomacy has itself fluctuated very much since the opening of hostilities. In his confidential moments the French Ambassador at Berlin has not concealed from me how difficult it was to rely upon the brilliant but changeable minds of the politicians at the head of France's imperial ally. Even with her they are playing a double game. M. Cambon has frequently complained in particular of the influence retained by M. Isvol'sky, who with regard to Austria-Hungary is pursuing a policy of personal revenge and doing his best to jumble the cards whenever she (Austria) seems likely to win the trick.

However, opinion here inclines to the view that the war is nearing its end, since the United [Balkan] States, for all their bluffing, are very anxious to open negotiations. It is thought that the question of Scutari will be solved in accordance with the wishes of the Cabinet at Vienna [which has the support of Germany and Italy] and which favours the annexation of this place to Albania, in spite of the fact that Russia is wobbling and cannot bring herself to desert Montenegro. As for the islands of the Ægean Archipelago, it seems impossible to mobilise an international squadron to drive out the Greeks, who know the value of the motto: "*Beati possidentes.*" Lastly, seeing how obstinate Bulgaria is in her demand for a war indemnity, it does not seem unlikely that French and German opposition to this course may be withdrawn, and that in the conversations that will take place at Paris over this particular point a way may possibly be found of making some concessions to the Sofia Cabinet.

People here have even begun to wish for the fall of Adrianople, so that Turkey may more speedily be brought to acquiesce in demands which are, by the way, regarded as exorbitant, and to hope that the young Turk Government will hold out against any attempted uprising by some of the officers, so that Ministers may be found who will be ready to sign the abdication of Ottoman rule in Europe.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) BEYENS.

## THE CRISIS OVER SCUTARI.

No. 103.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *April 4th, 1913.*

SIR,

The Scutari incident is, from the European point of view, undoubtedly the most serious that has occurred since the beginning of hostilities in the Balkans. It is, of course, quite understandable that the King of Montenegro should prove obstinate in resisting the orders of Austria-Hungary and the pressure of the Powers. In consequence of his military failures his crown is at stake, and his only chance of preserving it against the domestic revolution that may be expected from his exasperated subjects is to pose in their eyes as the victim of Austro-Hungarian policy. But he can only carry on the siege of Scutari with the co-operation of the Serbs; and the arrogance and contempt with which these latter receive the Vienna Cabinet's protests, can only be explained by their belief that St. Petersburg will support them. The Serbian Chargé d'Affaires was quite openly saying here lately that his Government would not have persisted in its course for the last six months in the face of Austrian opposition had they not received encouragement in their course from the Russian Minister, M. de Hartwig, who is a diplomatist of M. Isvolsky's school. One must admit that events have hitherto justified the venturesome audacity of the Belgrade Cabinet.<sup>31</sup>

Russia's policy betrays a hesitancy which curiously aggravates the European situation. M. Sasonov's heart is with his colleagues who are directing the policy of the Great Powers, but he feels his influence with the Tsar being undermined by the Court Party and the pan-Slavists. Hence his inconsequent behaviour. In London, through the medium of the Russian Ambassador, he adheres to the concert of the Powers who are determined to bring Montenegro to reason, yet he hesitates to give France an official mandate to represent her Russian ally in blockading the coast of Montenegro. There is no doubt that Paris is weary of this vacillation, but while grumbling, feels that this is one of the consequences of the alliance

and allows itself to drift into a discussion that may lead to a general war.

Berlin is not, at bottom, any better pleased with the turn given to the Triple Alliance by the Vienna Cabinet, but puts a better face on it, and contemplates with calm the complications that may ensue. In the very guarded statements made yesterday before the Budget Committee of the Reichstag, the only point on which Herr von Jagöw expressed himself with any definiteness that leaves no doubt as to Germany's intentions, was her determination to support her Ally, Austria-Hungary to the last.

In diplomatic circles in Berlin it is not thought, or, at least, it is no longer hoped, that the naval demonstration before Antivari will put an end to the siege of Scutari and stop the final assault for which the Montenegrins and Serbians are making active preparations. Should the place fall into their hands, it will require something more than a mere blockade and vainly reiterated injunctions to get them out of it again. If the Austrian troops invade Balkan territory—(and this is more likely to take place on the Serbian than the Montegrin side, because military operations would be easier in Serbia than in Montenegro), it would give cause for Russia to intervene, and might let loose a universal war. Those two Powers, on whose decision the peace of Europe hangs to-day, must surely hesitate before a possibility so serious,—at least it is hoped so here. To put it differently; it is believed here that the gravity of the danger to which all Europe would be exposed by any rash decision, is of itself the best guarantee that the danger will be avoided.

It will, of course, be necessary to offer Montenegro some compensation, since Austria-Hungary could not, for her own credit, leave her in possession of Scutari, the future capital of the future Albanian State. They talk here of offering her a certain portion of the coast-line, with a strip of territory to the South of Dulcigno, which would include St. Jean de Medua, a port that is surrounded by rocky cliffs, and is not capable of being developed for economic or military purposes.

Believe me to be,

(Signed) BEYENS.

## FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 104.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *April 16, 1913.*

SIR,

I have just been seeing the Minister for Foreign Affairs with whom I had a lengthy conversation about the incident at Nancy, of which you will have been informed by the newspapers. M. Pichon seems greatly distressed at the spirit of chauvinist susceptibility manifested by the German Press.<sup>32</sup>

The inspired organs of the Imperial Government are prudent, but the pan-German newspapers are spitting fire and flame; and it is to be regretted that Wolff's Agency should be so eager to spread throughout Germany articles whose tone is so deplorable. No precise details have yet been received as to what took place at Nancy; especially in the Casino—a third-rate place—where the quarrel started, and where a play called "The Uhlan" was being acted. They ought not to allow plays of this kind to be acted.

The report given by the local authorities was inadequate, and a high official has been sent to the spot to make serious investigations.

The affair is not of real importance, and there is no doubt that it will easily be settled, but—said the Minister—it is serious as showing how inflamed people's minds are on both sides.

"With us too—M. Pichon went on—there is a growing spirit of chauvinism that I greatly deplore, and which must be combated. Half of the Paris theatres are acting plays now that are patriotic or chauvinist. I never go to them, but that is not enough. We ought to have the means of preventing their being put on the stage. What is wanted is to quieten people's minds."

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## GROWTH OF FRENCH CHAUVINISM.

No. 105.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *April 17, 1913.*

SIR,

The final results are not yet known of the enquiry which the Government has instructed M. Ogier, an important official, to make at Nancy into the Franco-German episode. The numerous letters that have appeared in the papers, give, however, the impression that I had the honour to communicate to you yesterday, e.g., that what occurred was not of sufficient importance to warrant such a clashing of shields as was indulged in by a section of the German Press, nor the words uttered in the Berlin Parliament by the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

But these events will, no doubt, prove also—as I have often had the honour to tell you—that the tone of public opinion in France is becoming more and more chauvinist and rash. Measures ought to be taken to check this tendency, which the Government has really encouraged ever since the affair at Agadir and the formation of the Poincaré-Millerand-Delcassé Ministry.<sup>33</sup>

In this connection the "Journal" of this morning publishes an article by Victor Marguerite, headed "*To the Frontier*," to which I beg to call your attention.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## THE ROYAL HOUSES IN BRITAIN AND GERMANY.

No. 106.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *May 26, 1913.*

SIR,

Few royal marriages have been as popular as that of Princess Victoria Louise and Prince Ernest Augustus Duke of Brunswick and Luxemburg. The inhabitants of

Berlin expressed their pleasure by ovations to the Imperial Family which were extended to the royal guests whom they were entertaining for the occasion. It is easy to see from the newspapers that the same feeling of approval and satisfaction was felt throughout Germany. People were pleased to see such an auspicious ending to the ancient quarrel between Guelphs and Hohenzollerns that weighed like an embarrassing legacy from the past upon the brilliant future of the new German Empire. People commended the Emperor, not only for bestowing his only daughter upon the son of his old enemy, but also for having treated the latter, during the whole period of their children's betrothal, with a courtesy that never for one moment failed, studiously avoiding anything that might be mortifying to the heir of the man who was conquered at Langensalza. In proposing the healths of the young couple at the wedding breakfast, Wilhelm II in a speech full of tact and lofty sentiment, was pleased to place on an equal footing the houses of Guelph<sup>34</sup> and Hohenzollern "which have played such signal parts in the historical development of our German fatherland (die so markante Rollen in der geschichtlichen Entwicklung des Deutschen Vaterlandes gespielt haben)." History could not be more kindly parodied.

The Duke of Cumberland, uncle to the King of England, and to the Emperor of Russia, has always been treated with marked cordiality by both these princes. The British Court has never forgotten that the house of Hanover is a branch plucked from the royal stem of the House of England.<sup>35</sup> Hence William II.'s chivalrous fashion of solving the Guelph problem has been welcomed with sincere pleasure both in London and St Petersburg. It is not surprising that the English Sovereign and the Tsar were desirous of showing their pleasure by their presence at a wedding which sealed the reconciliation between the Guelphs and the Hohenzollerns. This feeling, even more than the ties of family, would suffice to account for their presence here at the festivities which have just come to an end. On the other hand, people have sought to attribute some political importance to the meeting of the three chief sovereigns of Europe. Of politics, there can, strictly speaking, have been not much question in the interview between William II. and George V. With the Tsar, the German Emperor no doubt seized the opportunity for some interesting conversation.

So much at least, may safely be said, that the visit of the English royal couple to Berlin appears in the eyes of Europe to be the confirmation and, as it were, the consecration of the *rapprochement* which has undoubtedly come about between Germany and Great Britain during the course of the Balkan war, during which both States have acted in unison to preserve the peace of Europe.<sup>36</sup> It is a signal which France would do well to ponder, at a time when she is wasting herself in efforts to redress the balance of strength between herself and Germany—efforts that may as likely as not be fruitless, and which are in any case bound to reveal to foreign countries the state of internal decomposition into which her army has fallen.

As for the Tsar's journey, it is a fresh proof of the good relations existing between the reigning houses of both Empires as well as between their Governments. These good relations date from the interview at Potsdam; the interview at Port Baltic cemented them, and the Balkan war has not impaired them. Some clear-sighted French diplomatists accuse Russia of playing a double game with her Ally in the interests of Germany. This is not unlikely, and would only be an additional reason why France should give up trying to counterbalance the military supremacy of Germany, and should dismiss the illusory phantom of "revanche."

Should one conclude from the English Sovereign's visit to Berlin that an Anglo-German *rapprochement* is being prepared, one that will have a definite goal, such as the absorption by Germany of the Belgian Congo, if, as the *Berlin Post* maintains, any *rapprochement* of this kind could only be realised in the form of a Colonial understanding.

We have learnt by the experience of 1909 that there would be nothing impossible in a secret agreement concluded by the Cabinets of London and Berlin at the expense of the Congo. But in 1909 only an insignificant part of Belgian Colonial territory was in question, and our right to this part was, however, disputed by England. To-day the *Post* talks as if it were quite a natural thing, of the voluntary, or forced, cession of our African dominions. However grasping the German colonials and pan-Germans may be, it is quite out of the question that England would allow the introduction into the heart of Africa of a rival whose expansive and economic power would be a

menace to the Colonies of Great Britain herself; nor to cede to her the magnificent basin of the Congo, unless Germany were in a position to offer an equivalent compensation. Were it a question of dividing up our colony, we might very reasonably begin to feel anxious. But even in this case it would be impossible to exclude France entirely from a bargain of this kind. What would make the danger real and urgent would be if the position of the Congo were, under England's auspices, to become the subject of secret discussions between the three Great Powers who are our neighbours in Europe, and if the spoils taken from us in Africa were made the means of bringing about a peaceful understanding between those powers. Matters, however, have not got to this pass. Nevertheless, in my opinion, we ought to keep a watchful eye on all the possible consequences of an Anglo-German Entente.<sup>37</sup>

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) G. BEYENS.

## THE THREE YEARS' MILITARY LAW IN FRANCE.

No. 107.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *June 12, 1913.*

SIR,

The papers have announced that the Cabinet Council has decided to ask the Chamber shortly to give special additional days for the discussion of the Army Bill, which they have determined to pass before Parliament is prorogued for the Summer.

The news is true. I had it confirmed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Government means to have the Bill establishing the Three Years' Service passed before the prorogation, even if it means that Parliament has to sit after July 14th.

M. Pichon feels quite sure of the Bill going through. "We shall have a fine majority on the general principle"—he said to me. "After that, the various clauses will get a varying number of votes, and then, when the whole bill comes on, we shall have an even more imposing majority than we had for the general principle."

It is now certain, therefore, that the French legislature is about to be burdened with measures that the country will scarcely be able to bear for long. The burden of the new law will fall so heavily upon the population, the expenditure which it will involve will be so exorbitant, that there will soon be an outcry in the country, and France will be faced with this dilemma: either renounce what she cannot bear to forego, or else, war at short notice. Heavy will be the responsibility of those who have brought the country to this pass. They are followed with a sort of infatuation, a kind of frenzy which is interesting, but deplorable. One is not now allowed, under pain of being marked as a traitor, to express even a doubt as to the need for the Three Years' Service. Everyone knows that the mass of the nation is by no means in favour of the projected reform, and they understand the danger that lies ahead. But they shut their eyes and press on.

The propaganda in favour of the Three Years' Bill, tending to re-awaken the chauvinist spirit, has been admirably planned and executed. It began by helping to get M. Poincaré elected President, and to-day continues to carry on its work regardless of the dangers that it is creating. There is a great anxiety throughout the country.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## SIR E. GREY ON FOREIGN POLICY.

No. 108.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *November 7, 1913.*

SIR,

Sir Edward Grey has made a speech at Newcastle on the duties of a Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He confined himself to generalities, hinting that the Prime Minister would take occasion of the Lord Mayor's Banquet on the 10th inst., to make more precise reference to the Government's programme in regard to foreign relations.

Sir Edward Grey began by saying that England, in concert with the other Great Powers, had tried to prevent the quarrel in the Balkans from turning into a universal

war. Their efforts had been crowned with success. The Parliamentary Opposition had shown its patriotism and had loyally supported the Government in moments of difficulty. The Minister went on to describe the task of his department, which, he said, should aim at four great objects.

(1) To prevent political changes, or combinations, that might menace the safety of the Empire from without.

(2) Not to increase the territorial responsibilities of the Empire, which were great enough already, but to confine itself to keeping and developing what England already possesses.

(3) To encourage British trade, above all by avoiding war.

(4) To use the nation's influence to further humanitarian ends throughout the world.

For practical purposes their aspirations may be summed up as follows:—

(1) *The Minister is in favour of maintaining the Triple Entente.*

(2) He is opposed to any policy of conquest, which would rouse the animosity of powerful rivals.

(3) He wants to further the economic expansion of the country abroad, by eliminating the anxiety produced by international complications; that is to say, by remaining on the best possible terms with Germany.

(4) He will not forbear to use England's prestige and influence with other nations (in particular, presumably, with weak States), in order to further humanitarian causes.

This formula—a dangerously elastic one—aims at pleasing the philanthropic party which is so powerful in this country, and leaves the door open for intervention, often in cases where intervention is unjustifiable and exasperating.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## UNPOPULARITY OF THREE YEARS' MILITARY LAW.

No. 109.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *December 13, 1913.*

SIR,

The news of the downfall of the Barthou Ministry has been received here with regret. It is regarded as being a successful attack on the prestige of President Poincaré, who is *persona grata* with the Cabinet of London. It is thought to be proof of how powerful his enemies are, and a fresh indication of the perpetual instability of French Ministers. It is realised, with some vexation, that the Three Years' Service is more genuinely unpopular than was thought; and the Republican Government's difficulties with regard to the Loan have made a marked impression.

M. Doumergue, who combines the functions of Premier with those of Minister of Foreign Affairs, is reputed to have been at one time far from favourable to the entente cordiale with England, and sceptical as to the good results of the Franco-Russian alliance.

It is perhaps, in order to neutralise this impression in London and St. Petersburg that M. Doumergue has sent a telegram to Sir E. Grey, saying that his efforts would be devoted to developing the confidence and friendship that already exist between the two nations; and has also telegraphed to M. Sazonov that it is his earnest desire to maintain the most cordial relations with his Excellency in the interests of the Alliance in which the two countries are so happily united.

The British Foreign Secretary in acknowledging, said that M. Doumergue might rely upon his co-operation in developing the entente cordiale; whilst the Russian Minister replied that he would co-operate to maintain and strengthen the Franco-Russian Alliance.

Such categorical dotting of the i's is by no means usual when portfolios change hands. It was probably thought to be desirable under the circumstances in order to contradict the rumours that were going about.

Believe me,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES TO TEXT.

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<sup>1</sup> Compare this statement of the Belgian diplomatist with "Ten Years of Secret Diplomacy" (*op cit*). This was, of course, the unanimous view of the Liberal Press, as can be gathered by reference to the files of the *Daily News*, *Manchester Guardian*, *Nation*, etc. The *Daily News* wanted Sir E. Grey's head on a charger. "G.M.G."—"Grey Must Go"—became its watchword. The feeling against the Foreign Secretary was so strong in Liberal circles that he would very probably have fallen but for the solid support he invariably received from the Unionist Party and the Unionist Press. It was commonly said in Liberal circles that he was kept in power by the Tory vote and the Tory influence; by the influences at the back of the undisclosed arrangements with France; by the influences which had laboured to bring war in 1911; by the influences which were poisoning Anglo-German relations day after day, week after week, month after month, with false statements of fact (such as those exposed by Sir T. Vezey Strong, Lord Mayor of London, in his letter to the *Daily Chronicle* of May, 1911) and studied misrepresentation of every German action in any and every part of the globe.

The realisation that we had been within an ace of war with Germany over Morocco filled all decent-minded men with horror, and the general revulsion of feeling was not confined to Liberal editors or politicians. Dr. Talbot, Bishop of Winchester; Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir Frank Lascelles, Sir Ernest Tritton and many others voiced the opinion of the bulk of the nation. The Anglo-German Friendship Society was founded in the course of the previous year (1911) by the Duke of Argyle, Sir Frank Lascelles and Sir John Lubbock, and enrolled an enormous number of eminent personages. At the meeting of the Society, held at the Mansion House, with the Lord Mayor of London in the chair, on November 2, 1911, the following resolution was passed. The Lord Mayor, Sir Frank Lascelles, Lord Brassey, Lord Courtney, Lord Weardale and Mr. Noel Buxton, M.P., spoke to it, and the Lord Chancellor, the Duke of Argyle, the three Archbishops, Sir Arthur Herbert, General Sir Alfred Turner, Lord Stanmore and many others associated themselves with it:—

This meeting desires to voice the widespread wish which prevails in the United Kingdom for the removal of all existing misunderstandings with Germany, and to emphatically reassure the German nation that no responsible body in the United Kingdom wishes to deny to Germany her title to a share in the settlement of international questions, or to view with unjustifiable hostility the colonial ambitions pertaining to a great Power, and urges on His Majesty's Government the desirability of taking action to remove the unfortunate impression felt in Germany as to its attitude towards her legitimate aspirations.

This was an implicit, if not explicit, condemnation of the policy of the Government in the second Morocco crisis. At the meeting

of the Liberal Federation at Bath on November 24, 1911, Sir John Brunner, the president, called for cheers for the Kaiser for having exerted his influence in favour of peace during the crisis. "An angry word from him would have opened the gates of hell." "The delegates," says the *Times* report, "responded with cheers which, the Chairman observed, were more unanimous than he had ever known in the House of Commons." At the same meeting Sir John Simon said: "Let them send to the democracy of Germany this message, that they could not tolerate the idea that there should be ill-feeling between them and us. (Cheers)."

Mr. H. W. Massingham's protest in the *Daily News*, October 20, contains a passage well worth meditating over to-day:

Have not the Admiralty and the Foreign Office been turned into a factory of anti-German sentiment, diplomacy, and warlike preparation? Is not the process quickened and intensified with each year, each month that passes, just as the country's fatal preoccupation with the misdeeds and evil character of the Boers was steadily heightened until the point of explosion was reached?

Speaking in London, November, 1912, Sir Harry Johnston said:—

One of the causes of the inordinate increase in the German navy was the announced intention of the leading Conservative politicians in Great Britain to erect a tariff war against foreign commerce throughout the British Empire. . . . In the Mediterranean Great Britain had used the whole of her power to prevent Germany getting a foothold in Morocco. . .

Mr. W. T. Stead wrote in the *Review of Reviews*, December, 1911:—

The fact remains that in order to put France in possession of Morocco we all but went to war with Germany. We have escaped war, but we have not escaped the national and abiding enmity of the German people. Is it possible to frame a heavier indictment of the foreign policy of any British Ministry? The secret, the open secret of this almost incredible crime against treaty faith, British interests and the peace of the world, is the unfortunate fact that Sir Edward Grey has been dominated by men at the Foreign Office who believe all considerations must be subordinated to the one supreme duty of thwarting Germany at every turn, even if in doing so British interests, treaty faith and the peace of the world are trampled underfoot. *I speak that of which I know.*

Even the *Spectator* caught the contagion, and, actually, in its issue of December 9, 1911, declared that if Germany could obtain the "Belgian Congo by purchase" it would "make no objection to the transaction." It went on, in its usual pontifical style: "If Germany could arrange amicably with Turkey to obtain a protectorate over Asia Minor, we should not attempt to inhibit the arrangement." Shades of the Bagdad Railway controversy!

The *Times* itself—which had wrought such incredible mischief—adopted a slightly modified tone. This very decided manifestation of opinion it was which brought about Lord Haldane's mission to Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Haldane arrived in Berlin on February 8. His visit was preceded by the arrival in Berlin of the English financier, Sir Edward Cassel (a personal friend of the late King Edward VII. and of the German Emperor), bearer of a Memorandum which he handed to the Kaiser "on the joint authority of Grey, Churchill and Lloyd George, of which the purpose was approximately as follows: Acceptance of British superiority at sea; no augmentation of the German naval programme—a reduction as far as possible of

this programme—and, on the part of England, no impediment to our colonial expansion; discussion and promotion of our colonial ambitions; proposals for mutual declaration that the two Powers would not take part in aggressive plans or combinations against one another.” According to Lord Haldane it was Germany that made the first advances, Herr Ballin having been entrusted in January with a message to the effect that the Kaiser was much concerned at the feeling between the two countries, and suggesting direct conversation between the two Governments. The message was conveyed by Herr Ballin to Sir Edward Cassel, who passed it on to Mr. Winston Churchill.

(See “Reflections on the World War,” by Th. von Bethmann-Hollweg; Thornton, Butterworth, Ltd.). See, too, in connection with the Haldane mission, Lord Haldane’s “Before the War” (Cassell); “How the War Came,” Lord Loreburn; “Mr. Lloyd George and the War,” Walter Roch; “The European Anarchy,” G. Lowes Dickinson; “My Memories,” Von. Tirpitz; “Truth and the War” (chapters 33 and 34), E. D. Morel.

The character of these negotiations was carefully concealed from the public. The British and German statesmen concerned failed to agree upon a formula which would have responded to the requirements of their respective policies. We now know from the negotiators themselves—and their accounts generally concur—the formulas proposed on either side. Every man must form his own opinion. My own, which has already been expressed (see “Truth and the War”), is that there was a sincere desire on both sides to reach a solution, but that the British Cabinet’s secret commitments to France, and, contingently, to Russia, *made it utterly impossible to arrive at a definite and comprehensive understanding with Germany*. The truth of this must be obvious to anyone who will face the broad facts of the case. Europe was divided by two great rival combinations of Power. Whether one takes the view that the Teutonic Group, or the Franco-Russian combination, was beating up for war, really makes no essential difference as regards the problem of Anglo-German relations *at that time*. Germany was the leading partner in one of the combinations, and Britain, although ostensibly, and in the public belief, free, was, in fact, inextricably involved with the other. Sir E. Grey’s secret diplomacy had placed us in such a position that in the event of a clash between the rival Groups we could not “honourably” avoid siding with the Franco-Russian, as was admitted in so many words by Sir E. Grey in his speech of August 3, 1914, in the House, and more explicitly by Mr. Lloyd George in the House on August 8, 1918. That fundamental fact, so long as it existed, dominated the situation, and while it might not, and did not, prevent accommodation with Germany on specific issues, it made a wider understanding out of the question. It is absurd and dishonest to say that it was the *manner* in which the clash came that decided Britain’s attitude, e.g., the German invasion of Belgium. Although every military strategist of any repute was aware that, faced by a war on two fronts, the German armies would use the Belgian corridor (see “Truth and the War”), the British Cabinet made no effort to save Belgium before it was too late. Compare the action of Sir Edward Grey to that of Mr. Gladstone in 1870. Until the very last moment Sir E. Grey declared that in the event of an invasion of Belgium the deciding factor in British action

would be public feeling, not Cabinet policy. We were not free to save Belgium. The issue was decided for us outside of Belgium altogether. Sir E. Grey declined to pledge Britain to neutrality if Belgium were not invaded. Two days before the German *ultimatum* to Belgium he pledged the country to an act of war against the German Fleet if war broke out between the rival combinations. There was no question of Belgium in the letter of the Opposition leaders of August 2, 1914, to Mr. Asquith when they expressed the view that "it would be fatal to the honour and security of the United Kingdom if we hesitated to support France and Russia in the present circumstances." Britain was unable to use her immense influence effectively in the cause of Peace, and was dragged into the war because, unknown to her people, she had become more and more deeply committed to the Franco-Russian combination since the military "conversations" with France first began in January, 1906, until the stage had been reached when an obligation of honour, as Lord Lansdowne admitted in 1914 and Mr. Lloyd George in 1918, had been contracted; and there was no drawing back.

The existence of these secret commitments *made it impossible to disclose the character of the Anglo-German negotiations, and their breakdown, to the public in 1912.* Indeed, it was necessary to mislead public opinion, as Mr. Asquith deliberately did, into believing that they had been successful. At that time the great mass of opinion in this country desired a complete elimination of the Anglo-German quarrel. It would not have tolerated a failure of negotiations over a "formula." But the mere publication of the notes and exchange of views on either side would have disclosed that behind the difficulty over the right choice of words to describe, or to safeguard, the relations between the two countries, lay concealed a whole chapter of secret British diplomatic dealing with one of the rival European combinations. Parliament and the country would have forced out the truth.

In all this frightful history of treachery to the British people—for by no other word can these secret transactions be described—the actions of Mr. Asquith, and especially his statement relative to the 1911 negotiations after war had come, form perhaps the blackest page of all.

Shortly after Lord Haldane's return from Berlin Mr. Asquith gave the House an optimistic view of what had taken place. Five months later (July 25), in which interval the new German Naval Law (a copy of which the Kaiser had handed over to Lord Haldane in February) had been published, and replied to in our Estimates—the proclamation of the failure of the Haldane mission—Mr. Asquith declared to the House:—

Our relations with the great German Empire are, I am glad to say, at this moment—and I am sure are likely to remain—relations of amity and goodwill.

That was bad enough in view of what lay behind. But the declaration can be plausibly defended on the ground that although the main negotiations, begun in January through the intermediary of Sir Ernest Cassel, to bring about a comprehensive agreement had failed, yet that negotiations on specific issues were still going on, and that a declaration of that kind, although unjustified in fact, might be justified diplomatically. For it was true that negotiations over colonial affairs—the future of the Portuguese-African colonies,

the Congo, the Bagdad Railway, Mesopotamian oil, and so on—went on all through 1912-13-14, and that an agreement had actually been initialled when the crash came. Thus between this declaration of Mr. Asquith on July 25, 1912, and the outbreak of the war, relations between the two countries had so far improved that lesser issues had formed the object of *continuous negotiation*. And yet, on October 2, 1914, Mr. Asquith actually told the country that the Haldane negotiations in 1911 had broken down because

They (the German Government) asked us—to put it quite plainly—they asked us for a free hand so far as we were concerned if, and when, they selected the opportunity to over-run, to dominate, the European world.

Mr. Asquith, therefore, informed the country five months after Lord Haldane's return from Berlin, when the failure of the Haldane mission was visible in the renewed spurt in naval expenditure on both sides, and after he had sent Mr. Winston Churchill to the Admiralty "to put the fleet in a state of instant and constant readiness for war,"<sup>1</sup> that our relations were, and he was sure would remain, relations of amity with a Power which (as he told the country two and a half years later) *had asked us with revolting cynicism to stand aside when it deemed the moment had come to overbear and dominate Europe!* That was the kind of Power that Mr. Asquith hoped we should always be friendly with! And with that shameful proposal before him in 1912, upon which he expatiated with the utmost indignation in the autumn of 1914, *he continued negotiations all through 1912 and 1913!* If the statement made to the country in October, 1914, were true, then Mr. Asquith stands condemned out of his own mouth. But it was, of course, untrue. The old political hand trusted to public ignorance and war-passion to make his case; and he trusted rightly. Note, too, his worthy emulator. Speaking at Leeds on January 17, 1913, Lord Haldane took his audience into his confidence with regard to the 1912 negotiations, and this is how he described the Germans with whom he had negotiated, *the men whom Mr. Asquith told a credulous public eighteen months later had proposed a shameful pact, to wit, that Britain should stand aside while they dominated the European world:*

I think (said Lord Haldane) there was not much we omitted, and pervading the whole was the spirit of these big men—and they were really very big men—who tried to look at things from something higher, from a point of view wider than that of mere controversy between nations, and who sought to realise the standpoint of humanity.

The future "Huns"!

<sup>3</sup> All through 1911, 1912 and part of 1913 the present author endeavoured, in the *Daily News* and in other papers, to rouse the country to insist upon ascertaining the real character of our relations with France and Russia, and to warn it that it was drifting into war.

<sup>4</sup> See Blunt's "Diaries" (*op cit*), pp. 192 and 385.

<sup>5</sup> This speech was delivered at the very moment that Lord Haldane was negotiating in Berlin. Mr. Winston Churchill was then First Lord of the Admiralty. The President of the Clyde Navigation Trust was on the platform, and Mr. Churchill declared: "Build your great dock, build it long, and build it deep, and,

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Winston Churchill at Dundee, June 5, 1915.

above all, build it wide, and we will provide you with no lack of great vessels to fill it." Mr. Blunt notes in his "Diaries" (January 30): "Lunched with Winston and Clementine. . . . It is clear, however, from his talk that he is bitten with Grey's anti-German policy. He said of the Germans: 'I never could learn their beastly language, nor will I till the Emperor William comes over here with his army.' Nevertheless, Winston strikes me as being open to conversion on all these matters." From Blunt's "Diaries" (October 21): "The party is over, and all have gone their several ways, Winston to Sheerness with Clementine. . . . He (Winston) has become most truculent about international affairs, *being engrossed in preparations for war with Germany.* . . . He (Winston) and George (Wyndham) have been talking these two days in absolute accord on army and navy affairs and the *coming war with Germany.*" ("Grey is Winston's son's god-father.") (*Italics mine.*)

<sup>6</sup> See Chapter X, "Truth and the War" (*op cit*).

<sup>7</sup> Arrived in London in July to take up his post. He died suddenly on September 25.

<sup>8</sup> After the Young Turkish Revolution British influence in Turkey waned proportionately with the increasing subservience of British policy to Russia; and Germany gradually came to play the rôle, which Britain had played for so many years, of protector of the Turk.

<sup>9</sup> Since the summer of this year (1912) the British Atlantic Fleet, hitherto based at Gibraltar, was withdrawn to home waters to increase the British striking force in the North Sea. The French Fleet, under the Franco-British naval arrangements, was mainly concentrated in the Mediterranean. From Blunt's "Diaries" (May 31): "The newspapers are full of the meeting at Malta, to which Winston and Clementine have gone with Nellie Hozier in the Admiralty yacht to meet Kitchener, Asquith, too." ("It was on this occasion," Mr. Blunt adds, "that our people came to the decision of getting the French Navy to police the Mediterranean, while the English Navy should keep the North Sea and English Channel for the French in the event of a war with Germany, thus enabling them to make a definite promise to the French Government of help by land in a war with Germany. . . ." (June 22): "Kitchener's meeting with Asquith and Churchill at Malta is really an important one, as they will have to settle between them what is to be our Mediterranean policy. Some want an Alliance offensive and defensive with France, others peace with Germany."

On July 20, Mr. Winston Churchill, reviewing the naval situation in the House, said that our naval forces left in the Mediterranean would, "in conjunction with the Navy of France, of course, make a considerable force, superior to all possible combinations."

<sup>10</sup> This throws a new and interesting light on the Bosnian crisis of 1908, and reveals German policy as endeavouring to bring the crisis to an end without direct German intervention.

<sup>11</sup> So long as a Russian Ambassador, or Minister, felt he could rely upon support in Court circles at Petrograd, which were entirely pan-Slav and Chauvinistic, he went extreme lengths. M. de Hartwig at Belgrade was a typical example.

<sup>12</sup> See Bogitchevich "Causes of the War" (*op cit*) and Miss Durham's "Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle" (*op cit*) for the inner motives of Russian policy at this period. Russia was not ready for war, and the Balkan war came prematurely for her plans. See also the Soviet Government's publications of the secret archives of the Russian Foreign Office. See, too, Note <sup>25</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> See Note 1.

<sup>14</sup> "Now, at the present day, in the year 1912, just as in 1866 and just as in 1870, war will take place the instant the German forces by land and sea are, by their superiority at every point, as certain of victory as anything in human calculation can be made certain. Germany strikes when Germany's hour has struck. That is the time-honoured policy of the German Foreign Office. That was the policy relentlessly followed by Bismarck and Moltke in 1866 and 1870; it has been her policy decade by decade since that date; it is her policy at the present hour. And, gentlemen, it is an excellent policy. It is, or should be, the policy of every nation prepared to play a great part in history."

This speech of the veteran British general, who was probably well aware of our secret commitments to France, and was stumping the country in the interests of universal military service, greatly scandalised Liberal Ministers at the time, who denounced it and its author up hill and down dale. But it provided them with an excellent imagery for public contemplation after August, 1914! In point of fact, Germany "struck" no one after 1870. And, if she had wanted to strike, and to strike with effect, she had an excellent opportunity in 1908, when the Bosnian annexation crisis arose. Russia was then quite unready for war, and her triumph would have been easy. Another excellent opportunity came at the time of the Balkan war in 1912, when she worked earnestly for peace. (See Notes <sup>18</sup> and <sup>37</sup>.) Her relative military superiority in relation to the Franco-Russian combination had been a decreasing, not an increasing, factor since 1910. No doubt some German soldiers wanted to strike on all these occasions. Men of war by profession and men of war by instinct, whether, in the first case soldiers or sailors, or civilians in the second case, always want to strike when they think the moment propitious. Lord Fisher wanted to strike when the German Fleet, compared to the British, was as a fleet of fishing smacks; so did Mr. Horatio Bottomley and Mr. J. L. Maxze.

<sup>15</sup> See previous Note.

<sup>16</sup> Subsequently assassinated at Serajevo.

<sup>17</sup> "Germany, was strong for peace," says Miss Durham ("Twenty Years of Balkan Tangle," *op cit*). Yet the provocation received by Austria from the Serbs was immense, and behind the Serbs stood Russia. I recommend a careful perusal of Chapter XIX., "The First Drops of the Thunderstorm," of Miss Durham's book. If Germany had wanted war—she that was always ready, as Bismarck once said to Crispi—a word of encouragement to Austria was all that would have been needed, for Austria was straining at the leash. (See, too, Bogitchevich's "Causes of the War," *op cit*; "The Inner History of the Balkan War," Rankin: Constable, London; and "Pre-War Diplomacy," by E. D. Morel: National Labour Press.)

<sup>18</sup> Sir E. Grey and Prince Lichnowsky were negotiating over a colonial agreement and Mesopotamian oil.

<sup>19</sup> Russia was playing for time, and her policy was purely hypocritical. The evidence is copious. The Serbian Minister at Bucharest represents his Russian and French colleagues as advising him to "await with as great a degree of preparedness as possible the important events which must make their appearance among the Great Powers" (November 13, 1912). The Serbian Minister at Petrograd quotes Sazonov as saying: "That in view of our (Serbia's) great successes he had confidence in our strength, and believed that we would be able to deliver a blow at Austria. For that reason we should feel satisfied with what we were to receive, and consider it merely as a temporary halting-place on the road to further gains; for the future belonged to us" (December 27, 1912). And again (February 4, 1913): "Upon this occasion the Foreign Minister (Sazonov) told me that Serbia was the only State in the Balkans in which Russia had confidence, and that Russia would do anything for Serbia." And once more (April 29): "Again Sazonov told me that we must work for the future because we would acquire a great deal of territory from Austria." Yougourieff, a Russian officer attached to the Russian Legation at Cetinje (capital of Montenegro), and superintending the military cadet school financed by Russia, said to Miss Durham (October 3, 1912): "Nothing is yet ready. We are working as fast as possible, but there is much yet to do. These people must wait!" Miss Durham asked him: "And when will you be ready, Monsieur?" "In two years from now, Mademoiselle, we shall be absolutely ready for our great war!" The object of Russian diplomacy in 1913 was to secure a settlement of the Balkan war, and to rein in the Serbs from making the situation too intolerable for Austria. Russia, meantime, was feverishly pushing on her war preparations. See evidence collected in "Truth and the War" (*op. cit.*), "Pre-War Diplomacy" (*op. cit.*); also in "Causes of the War" (Bogitchevich, *op. cit.*). See, too, Bethmann-Holweg's speech when introducing the increased German Army estimates.

<sup>20</sup> The positive proof the French war party then acquired, that it could count unreservedly upon British support, gave an impetus to the "Revanche" passions, which were incarnate in President Poincaré, whom the French Socialists openly accuse to-day of having been one of the chief instigators of the war. General Zurlinden, a former Minister of War and ex-Military Governor of Paris, in the course of an article in the *Paris Figaro* (February, 1913), explained that Germany increased the peace footing of her army by two army corps in 1912 after Agadir:

Because Germany knew that if war had broken out at that moment the British forces, to the strength of two army corps, would have joined our Eastern troops and fought side by side with them, arm in arm, as in the old days of the Crimean.

<sup>21</sup> Four days after M. Delcassé's appointment the Russian Ambassador in London sent a cypher message to his Government (peace and war were hanging in the balance over the Balkan trouble), of which the following is a salient passage:

When I recall his (M. Cambon, the French Ambassador in London) conversations with me, and the attitude of Poincaré, the thought comes to me, as a conviction, that of all the Powers France is the only one which, not to say that it wishes war, would yet look upon it without great

regret. In my case, nothing has shown me that France has actively contributed in working in the sense of a compromise. Now, a compromise—is peace; beyond a compromise there lies war. . . . She (France) has, either rightly or wrongly, complete trust in her army; the old effervescing minority has again shown itself, and France could very well accept that the circumstances to-day are more favourable than they would ever be later.

The appointment of Delcassé the man identified more than any other man in French public life with the anti-German war party in France—to Petrograd was the personal act of Poincaré. Poincaré and Isvolsky, who were on terms of close intimacy, were both anxious to get rid of M. Georges Louis, the distinguished diplomat, who had represented France at the Tsar's court since June, 1909. Louis was known as a convinced opponent of the influences working for war, both in Petrograd and in Paris, and was an obstacle in the path of Isvolsky, the prime mover on the Russian side of the war party. An attempt had already been made to oust him in May, 1912, when Poincaré was Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, following an inspired attack upon him in the jingo nationalist organ, the *Echo de Paris*, whose then editor was the brother of a prominent official at the French Foreign Office. Indeed, Louis received a peremptory telegram signed by the Director of the Political Department at the French Foreign Office (M. Paléologue, who afterwards succeeded Delcassé at Petrograd) instructing him to apply for his recall! Louis declined, came to Paris, and returned to Petrograd in his former capacity. Paléologue was an intimate friend of the Grand Duke Paul, then living in the suburbs of Paris, and one of Isvolsky's ardent partisans. When Poincaré paid his first visit to Petrograd in August, 1912, he was everywhere accompanied by Isvolsky, and gave the cold shoulder to Louis. Poincaré entered the Elysée (the Parisian residence of the French President) after his election to the Presidency on February 18, 1913. The next day Louis was summarily retired. The French Press maintained complete silence on the incident, and Louis made no public statement. He died in 1915. Many details are thrown upon this intrigue by M. Fernand Gouttenoire de Toury in his "Poincaré a-t-il voulu la guerre": Paris, Editions Clarté, 1920.)

<sup>22</sup> That is, be a candidate for the Presidency of the Republic.

<sup>23</sup> See, for the Russian and German military preparations of this year. "Truth and the War" (*op. cit.*) and "Pre-War Diplomacy" (*op. cit.*).

<sup>24</sup> The Serbo-Bulgarian Agreement was the basis of the Balkan League. It was engineered and inspired by M. de Hartwig, Russia's famous Minister at Belgrade, and concluded on February 29, 1912. It made the Tsar arbiter in all disputes between the parties. It contained provisions for sharing the spoils in the event of war with Turkey, and, in effect, placed the two Balkan States under Russia's protection for the special purpose of obtaining her support in any action they might have to take against Austria.

President Poincaré was shown the text of the Treaty by Isvolsky, then Russian Ambassador in Paris, in September, 1912, just before the first Balkan war. He at once exclaimed that it was an "instrument of war," which, of course, was true. That was its purport, but the war with Turkey came too soon for Russia's main

plans, and the subsequent collision between the victorious States was a matter of grievous disappointment to the Russian war party.

Having engineered the Balkan Alliance, it became necessary that Russian Ministers should ascertain definitely whether they could count upon French and British support if war between Austria and Russia should break out as the result of it, i.e., if Austria and Serbia fought, and Russia helped Serbia, and Germany came in to support Austria, as by the published terms of her Alliance with that Power she was bound to do, would France and Britain support Russia? The positive assurances the Russian Government received in the affirmative have been revealed by the secret archives of the Russian Foreign Office, published by the Soviet Government. (See "Pre-War Diplomacy," *op cit*, pp. 20 and 21.)

The full text of the Serbo-Bulgarian Agreement is given in Bogitchevich's "Causes of the War" (*op cit*).

<sup>25</sup> "For Germany, the presence of France on one frontier and Russia on the other, creates a crisis that is constant and unchanging." (See "The Naval and Military Situation of the British Isles," by "An Islander": John Murray, 1913; the authorship was generally attributed to Lord Esher.) "The possibility of a war on two fronts is the nightmare of German strategists, and considering the pace at which Russia has been building up her field armies since 1905, the nightmare is not likely to be soon conjured away."—Colonel Repington in the *Times*, 1911.

"The German army is vital, not merely to the existence of the German Empire, but to the very life and independence of the nation itself, surrounded as Germany is by other nations, each of which possesses armies about as powerful as her own. We forget that, while we insist upon a 60 per cent. superiority (as far as our naval strength is concerned) over Germany being essential to guarantee the integrity of our own shores, Germany herself has nothing like that superiority over France alone, and she has, of course, in addition, to reckon with Russia on her eastern frontier. Germany has nothing which approximates to a two-Power standard. She has, therefore, become alarmed by recent events, and is spending huge sums of money on the expansion of her military resources."—Mr. Lloyd George in the *Daily Chronicle*, January 1, 1914.

<sup>26</sup> Compare with Notes 19 21.

<sup>27</sup> Yet from 1914 onwards we have been told that the French were taken by surprise!

<sup>28</sup> See Note 19.

<sup>29</sup> See Note 24.

<sup>30</sup> See Note 24.

<sup>31</sup> See Note 24.

<sup>32</sup> See the remarks of the Belgian Minister in Brussels in Despatches 102 and 103.

<sup>33</sup> This was the truth which Jaurès ceaselessly accentuated—that the Chauvinism came from the top, not from below.

<sup>34</sup> In Chapter LXI. of "The Life of Sir Charles Dilke" (Gwynn and Tuckwell: John Murray) the following table-talk of Dilke's

is recorded: "His hint at the bad feeling between the Kaiser and King Edward was dexterous; it was real and insuperable; none of our Royal family can forgive the seizure of Hanover by Prussia."

In 1866, in the Austro-Prussian war, Hanover sided with Austria. The Hanoverian army was surrounded by the Prussians and capitulated at Langensalza. Prussia shortly afterwards annexed Hanover.

Welf was the name of the founder of the family which became known as Guelph's. It is from this family that the present British Royal house is descended. The Act of Settlement of 1701 made Sophia (daughter of the Elector Palatine, and of Elizabeth, daughter of James First of England) heiress of the English crown. Sophia married Ernest Augustus, Duke of Hanover, fourth son of the Duke of Brunswick-Luneberg. The son of Ernest Augustus and of Sophia, George Lewis, became King of England in 1714 as George I.

<sup>35</sup> This episode was calculated to improve the relations between the courts of Britain and Germany, which had been notoriously strained during the reign of Edward VII. owing to the antipathy between Edward VII. and his nephew, the Kaiser. Indeed, that antipathy must be regarded as one of the potent causes of Anglo-German friction during Edward VII.'s reign, and, therefore, as one of the causes of the Great War.

<sup>36</sup> Both sides gave public testimony of the co-operation each had received from the other. It cannot be too often emphasised that if Germany had been "plotting" war her obvious interest would have been to have pushed Austria into bellicose action instead, as she did, restraining her partner to the extent of incurring her reproaches. If war had been the purpose of Germany, a war in the opening months of 1913 would have been waged with much greater chance of success than in the summer of 1914 when Russia had had eighteen additional months to push on her intensive preparations. Germany was relatively much stronger in the spring of 1913 than in the summer of 1914, Russia relatively much stronger in the summer of 1914 than in the spring of 1913. Yet even the Russian Ambassador in London opines in his Report of February 12, 1913 (Russian archives): "If Germany had wished for war she would not have done so much in the matter (of restraining Austria)." An even better opportunity for a German plotting against the peace of Europe occurred, of course, in 1908, at the time of Austria's annexation of Bosnia, when Russia was, militarily speaking, almost impotent owing to her disaster in the war with Japan.

<sup>37</sup> See Note 37, Part VI.



## PART VIII.

[1914: to the Murder of the Austrian Heir-Apparent,  
June 28.]

The Three Years' Military Service Law—Belgian Apprehensions—The Jingo Policy of Poincaré, Millerand and Deleassé—Caillaux's Opposition to the Three Years' Military Service Law—Franco-German-Syrian Railway Agreement—Poincaré's Policy—Sir E. Grey in Paris—Question of an Open Alliance—Russia's Pressure on France—Conflicting tendencies in French Politics—Serbia and the Murder of the Austrian Heir-Apparent.



## PART VIII.

### Chronology of Principal Events to June 1914.

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Threatened civil war and insurrection in Ireland ...*Jan.-June.*

Mr. Lloyd George in the *Daily Chronicle*:

The German army was vital, not merely to the existence of the German Empire, but to the very life and independence of the nation itself, surrounded, as Germany is, by other nations, each of which possesses armies as powerful as her own. We forget that, while we insist upon a 60 per cent. superiority (so far as our naval strength is concerned) over Germany being essential to guarantee the integrity of our own shores—Germany herself has nothing like that superiority over France alone, and she has, of course, in addition, to reckon with Russia on her eastern frontier. Germany has nothing which approximates to a Two-Power Standard. She has, therefore, become alarmed by recent issues, and is spending huge sums of money on the expansion of her military resources.

*January 1.*

Liberal movement in Britain for a reduction of Naval Estimates, headed by Mr. Lloyd George .....*Jan.-March.*

Lord Haldane at Horton, January 13:

The Great Powers had grouped themselves . . . and Europe was an armed camp, but an armed camp in which peace not only prevailed, but in which the indications were that there was a far greater prospect of peace than ever there was before. . . . It was with pleasure that he thought of the great power for good of the two statesmen in Europe, Dr. Bethmann-Hollweg and Sir Edward Grey. . . .

*January 25.*

Immense purchase of warlike stores by Russia .....*Jan.-June.*

Great Labour and popular discontent in Russia .....*Spring.*

The King's Speech includes the following passage:

My relations with foreign Powers continue to be friendly. I am happy to say that my negotiations, both with the German Government and the Ottoman Government, as regards matters of importance to the commercial and industrial interests of this country in Mesopotamia, are rapidly approaching a satisfactory issue. . . .

*February 10.*

Paschitsch, Serbian Minister-President, received by Tsar in audience: congratulates Tsar that "Russia had armed herself so thoroughly": asks the Tsar for 120,000 rifles, munitions and howitzers, Tsar agrees that Sazonov shall be furnished with a list of Serbia's requirements: Tsar asks how many soldiers Serbia can put in the field, Paschitsch answers "Half a million," whereupon the Tsar remarks "That is sufficient, it is no trifle, one can go a great way with that": Paschitsch moots the idea of a matrimonial alliance between the son of King Peter of Serbia and one of the Russian Grand Duchesses, and the Tsar considers the suggestion favourably. The interview ends by the Tsar declaring "For Serbia we shall do everything." (Revealed in 1919) .....*February.*

War Council at Petrograd to elaborate "a general program of action in order to secure for us a favourable solution of the historical question of the Straits." Memorandum of Council opens with the prediction that the "expected crisis" which "may possibly soon arrive demands the immediate strengthening of Russia's forces in the Black Sea district." .....*February.*

Loan of £20 millions for improvements in Polish railways and roads (i.e., on the German frontier) contracted by Russia in Paris. ....*February.*

British Naval Estimates (£51,550,000) passed through House. ....*March.*

Lord Charles Beresford in the House: "I ask the First Lord: Are you going to trust to France to defend us in the Mediterranean? . . . If we are, what are we to give France in return? . . . What are we going to do for France? It may be very disagreeable, but we are liable with these ententes and alliances." *March 18.*

The *Birshewija Viedomosti*, of Petrograd, the organ of the Russian Minister of War, publishes a violent article, in which it states that Russia's strategy in war will no longer be "defensive" but "active." *Golos Moskvy* speaks of the time coming when "the crossing of the Austrian frontier by the Russian army will become an unavoidable decision." *Novoe Vremya* states: "The hour is approaching. . . . It is necessary to work on the army from top to bottom, day and night." .....*March.*

The *Times* correspondent at Petrograd reports that "large extraordinary military and naval credits have been discussed in a secret sitting in the Duma," and that the Russian army has now attained "an effective numerical strength hitherto unprecedented." (Despatch headed "Russia's Giant Army: Unprecedented Effectives.") .....*March.*

Russia places heavy duties upon the importation of German rye and flour .....*March.*

Protracted political struggle in France over the maintenance of the Three Years' Military Law. Russian pressure exercised through French Ambassador in Petrograd .....*Spring-early summer.*

Russia's military and naval estimates £97 millions .....*March.*

The *Times* correspondent in Petrograd reports that a "test mobilisation" of the Russian armies is proceeding .....*April.*

Visit of King George, Queen Mary, and Sir E. Grey to Paris. ....*April.*

Conference between Sir E. Grey and French Ministers in Paris (M. Cambon present). Plans discussed for an Anglo-Russian Naval Convention. (Revealed in 1919.) .....*April.*

Sir E. Grey confirms Mr. Asquith's previous statements in Parliament as to British freedom from any engagements towards

London for the purpose of drawing up technical conditions for possible action by the naval forces of England, Russia and France." (Revealed in 1919.) ..... *May.*

Labour strikes increase in Russia : 130,000 workers involved in Petrograd alone ..... *May 1.*

Complete mobilisation of all the Reserves of the three annual contingents of 1907 to 1909 ordered for the whole Russian Empire under the form of "exercises" (at an expenditure of £10 million sterling) due to take place in the autumn ..... *May.*

Russia's naval agent in London, Captain Volkov, instructed to discuss "technical" questions with British Admiralty. Russian Admiralty provide him with following instructions : "Our interests on the Northern scene of operations require that England keeps as large a part of the German Fleet as possible in check on the North Sea. This would make up for the overwhelming superiority of the German Fleet over our own, and perhaps admit of a landing operation in Pomerania in a favourable case. Should the possibility of engaging in this operation present itself its realisation would cause considerable difficulties on account of the fresh developments of our transport service in the Baltic. The English Government could render us a substantial service if it would agree to send a sufficient number of boats to our Baltic ports to compensate for our lack of means of transport before the beginning of war operations." (Revealed 1919.) ..... *May.*

Sir E. Grey repeats his denials of April 28 ..... *June 11.*

The *Times* military correspondent writes : "There are signs that Russia has done with defensive strategy. The increased number of guns in the Russian army corps, the growing efficiency of the army, and the improvements made or planned in strategic railways are, again, matters which cannot be left out of account. These things are well calculated to make the Germans anxious." ..... *June.*

Russian Ambassador warns Russian Naval Staff in London that great caution must be exercised in referring to a landing in Pomerania or the despatch of British transports to the Baltic before the outbreak of war, "so that the rest may not be jeopardised." (Revealed in 1919.) ..... *June.*

Extension of Russian strikes; armed conflicts in Petrograd; barricades erected; many killed ..... *June-July.*

Russian Ambassador informs his Government that Sir E. Grey is disquieted over "false" rumours in German Press about the Anglo-Russian Naval Convention : that he is communicating with the German Ambassador on the subject and telling him that "No alliance or convention existed between England, France and Russia," but that they "regularly conferred with one another about everything, and in each instance as if they were allies," but that their conferences were not "menacing to Germany." ..... *June.*

Murder of the Austrian Heir Apparent at Serajevo, a Bosnian town, by Serbians (nationality of murderers only admitted in June, 1919) : murders arranged by the Serbian Major Tawkesitch, of the "Black Hand," an organisation formed by Serbian officers which had played a predominant part in Serbian politics ever since the murder of the Serbian King Alexander and his Queen in 1903,

which murder was also arranged by this organisation. In his recently-published book ("La Main Noire"), the Serbian, Commander Lazarevitch, asserts that the murder had been long prepared, and that the arrival of the Archduke at Serajevo was regarded as a "blessing." "By this new murder," he says, "they (the "Black Hand") hoped to intensify still further their power in the country." They also anticipated the outbreak of grave trouble in Bosnia, which would have been the prelude to an attack upon Austria, and hastened the triumph of Serbian aspirations." Lazarevitch also declares that the "Black Hand" was "assured in advance of Russian intervention in the war."

In his "Causes of the War," the Serbian diplomatist, Bogitchevich, comments on the murder thus :

Can anyone (he says) that knows Serbian conditions even partially believe that the Serbian Government knew nothing of the conspiratory activities of certain circles of officers, professors, and *comitadji* in Bosnia, and that it knew nothing of the preparatory measures in Serbia for the attempt upon the Austrian royal couple? . . . The indifference of the Serbian Government towards anything that might be done on the part of Austria as regards the assassination of the royal couple, the loquacity and megalomania of Serbian diplomacy displayed in official statements and interviews, together with the measureless arrogance of the Serbian Press, indicated with absolute certainty that Serbia must have been assured that war against Germany and Austria had been resolved upon, and the assassination of the Austrian heirs to the throne furnished a favourable pretext for the war, only because England and France had allowed themselves to be drawn into this conflict (which, in and of itself, was but a local conflict between Austria and Serbia) by Russia. This was unquestionably a great success for Russian diplomacy, but it also succeeded in establishing the responsibility for this unjustifiable war. For fully three weeks the Serbian Government, although daily expecting Austria-Hungary's demands for expiation, did absolutely nothing to anticipate the Austrian Government by means of conciliatory proposals and other measures. . . . Is it possible that the Serbian Government could have displayed so frivolous an attitude towards Austria if it were not already carrying about in its pocket the most binding assurances from Russia? Why did Russia, already in February, 1914—it is a notorious fact—begin with her "trial" mobilisations, and why did she not demobilise the "trial" mobilised troops, and why did she continue these trial mobilisations down to the time of the outbreak of war?

DESPATCHES FROM THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN  
PARIS, THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN BERLIN,  
AND THE BELGIAN MINISTER IN LONDON.

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FRANCE AND THE PEACE OF EUROPE.

No. 110.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *January 16, 1914.*

SIR,

I have already repeatedly had the honour to report to you on the early manifestation of that new political group founded by M. Briand with the support of M. Barthou, M. Pichon, and their associates. Its activities are now taking shape. M. Briand has just been nominated President of the Association; and propaganda continues to be carried on.

This movement will no doubt have an influence on the coming elections, but it is a question whether it will be as powerful as its authors wish, seeing that important personages in the political world—such as MM. Ribot, Develle, Meline, and many others—who are moderate and comparatively conservative, have so far held aloof from it.

In any case, these activities are interesting. They may result in moderating the sectarian zeal of politicians; and one of their definite aims is to maintain and perpetuate the consequences of the Three Years' Law. If I were a Frenchman I quite think that my sympathies would be with the group that owes its formation to M. Briand as constituting an improvement on the present state of things. Being, however, a Belgian, I am bound to consider what is going on from a different angle.

There seems to me no doubt a success of M. Caillaux's policy; a success of the Radicals and Radical-Socialists would be more to our interest.

I have already had the honour to mention that it was Messrs. Poincaré, Delcassé, Millerand, and their friends who have created and pursued that policy of nationalism, flag-wagging, and jingoism, whose revival we have been observing. It is a danger to Europe—and to Belgium. I see in it the greatest peril that threatens the peace of Europe to-day. Not that I have any right to suppose that the French Government is disposed deliberately to disturb the peace—I am inclined to the opposite belief—but because the line taken by the Barthou Ministry is, in my opinion, the determining cause of the increase of militarist tendencies in Germany.

Turkey's martial mania and the Three Years' Law seem to me to constitute the only formidable dangers to the peace of Europe. I think I can diagnose the danger that the present military legislation in France is promoting.

France is suffering from the falling off in her birth rate and will not long be able to endure the system of Three Years' Service. The strain is too great, both from the financial point of view and from that of the burden which it entails upon individuals. Such a strain is beyond her powers to endure, and what will she do to escape from the difficult position in which she will find herself placed? Everybody is agreed that the 50,000 men whom the Vincent amendment added to the contingent are superfluous and useless. They are trying to find some decorous way of gracefully getting rid of them. But what then?

It is not expected, at least for the moment, that the parties and persons who have been exerting themselves considerably to ensure the passage of the Three Years' Service Law will look favourably or even with tolerance on any reversal of their militarist policy. Besides, there is Morocco, where General Liautey is calling for considerable reinforcements to bring his own contingent up to an effective of 100 or 150 thousand men. He wants to bring about a final union between Algeria and Morocco. At present, indirect methods are being used; buying camels at fancy prices from those tribes whose friendship it is desired to obtain, and, at the same time, by this means hampering their movements. But this method is too costly and takes too long to carry out. Between Morocco and Algiers there are formidable tribes, to deal with whom large forces are necessary. The effectives

must, therefore, be increased by 60 or 80 thousand troops, and those persons who are urging that this policy should be carried out forthwith will not be favourable to any slackening of France's new military efforts.

M. Caillaux voted against the Three Years' Law. The number of politicians who support him and share his views in the matter is a large one. The Premier, urged on by the leading men in the country, has promised faithfully to observe the Three Years' Law, but it is not unreasonable to suppose that he and his friends, in their own minds, intend to modify considerably the rigours of the present system.

M. Caillaux, who is the real leader of the House, is known to favour a *rapprochement* with Germany. He knows his countrymen through and through, and is well aware that outside the official political cliques and a handful of chauvinists and persons who dare not say what they think or want, by far the greater number of Frenchmen, the peasants, shopkeepers, and industrialists, are impatient under the excessive expenditure and personal liabilities imposed upon them.

Electioneering is about to begin in earnest, and I have no doubt that the result of it all will be to neutralise the effect of the combination created by M. Briand. They are trying in every way to wear down M. Caillaux's policy, and want to prevent his going to the country. Nobody at the present time can calculate what the upshot of the contest would be; but I thought it important to remind you that we, as Belgians, have certainly no reason to desire M. Caillaux's downfall. This statesman may endanger the national finances. He may bring about unhealthy dissensions that may be deplorable for France's domestic policy; but I consider that his presence in power will lessen the acuteness of international jealousies and will constitute a better basis for relations between France and Germany.<sup>1</sup>

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 111.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *February 20, 1914.*

SIR,

The Franco-German agreement with regard to Asia Minor, which was quite recently concluded in Berlin after difficult negotiations, and thanks to the personal intervention of the Chancellor, secures to France a sphere of action and considerable influence in Syria. She will be able to carry a railway line from Beirut all along the Oronte Valley behind the range of Anti-Lebanon as far as Aleppo, where it will form a junction with the German lines. Another French railway, also starting from Beirut and passing through Homs, will meet the Euphrates in the direction of latitude 35. M. Cambon showed me these lines as traced on the map. They have not yet been made public. The Mediterranean coast between Alexandretta and Beirut will be neutralised, and no railway lines may be constructed there whether by Germany or France, neither along the shore nor through the Anti-Lebanon range. No need is recognised for any such line of communication, and it would meet with the hostility of the fanatical tribes of the Anti-Lebanon. These tribes close their territory to Europeans and themselves transport the products of their soil—principally tobacco—down to Port Latakia. The difficulty of the negotiations lay principally in the precise delimitation of the French and German zones of influence (60 kilometres on each side of the rails) so as to prevent their overlapping. France keeps additionally the railway concessions that she obtained from Turkey in the rich mining district of ancient Cappadocia, all along the Black Sea, as well as the highly-remunerative railway from Smyrna to Kassaba.<sup>2</sup>

She is, of course, excluded for all time from the great Bagdad railway enterprise, the main line which will run right across Asia Minor and tap all the resources of the country. But the fault lies, as you know, with the short-sighted diplomacy of the Quai D'Orsay, which made it impossible for the Ottoman Bank to share the gigantic

effort which German finance was hesitating to undertake alone. Instead of bowing to the irreparable, and remaining content with the excellent harvest which French finance (ably backed by the Ambassador) could still reap, a section of the Paris Press is now falling foul of the new agreement and those who negotiated it. At the head of the grumblers is M. Tardieu, the political editor of *Le Temps*. He omits no opportunity of attacking Germany's policy and all those who are trying to bring about a *rapprochement* between the two neighbouring countries in the field of economic interests. M. Cambon did not seem to be troubled by these polemics. He will go to Paris, however, next week in order to defend the agreement to whose successful conclusion he has so much contributed, and to explain its good points to M. Doumergue, who is still somewhat of a novice in these subjects.

I asked the Ambassador whether the agreement in Asia Minor, which, as I had the honour to write you, was much desired by the Emperor, will, in his opinion, help to improve the relations between France and Germany.

"Official relations, yes, perhaps to some extent," answered M. Cambon, "but I do not think that the agreement will affect the great body of public opinion on both sides of the Vosges. It will not, unfortunately, change the tone of the French Press towards the Germans. We, too, since the Dreyfus affair, have in France a military and nationalist party which will not have a *rapprochement* with Germany at any price, and which is stirring up most of the papers to take an aggressive tone. The Government would have to reckon with them, and with the party whose mouthpiece they are, should any untoward episode suddenly occur again between the two nations. There is no doubt whatever that the majority, both of Germans and Frenchmen, desire to live at peace; but there is a powerful minority in each country that dreams of nothing but battles and wars, either of conquest or revenge. That is the peril that is always with us; it is like living alongside a barrel of gunpowder which may explode on the slightest provocation."

In the course of the conversation the Ambassador appeared much concerned about the change of Ministry which has taken place so suddenly in Russia, and about the resignation of M. Sasonov, which will be followed

probably by that of M. Kokotzov. Apparently M. Delcassé, before he left, had no idea that the downfall of the Russian Prime Minister was imminent. Does the fact that France's representative has been deliberately kept in the dark imply that Russian policy is being revised? It was this that the Ambassador was asking himself.

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) BEYENS.

### M. POINCARÉ AND FRANCO-RUSSIAN RELATIONS.

No. 112.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *March 10, 1914.*

SIR,

Directly the fine weather sets in, the President of the French Republic intends to continue his tour round the various provincial centres where his visit is requested. He receives invitations from all parts of the country, and nearly always accedes to these requests, which flatter him and suit his policy. He knows the effect of his personal charm, and is conscious that there is no falling off in the success of his speeches. What he says is always clever and brilliant; he conscientiously prepares his phrases so as to avoid the commonplace; mentions all that ought to be mentioned; makes eloquent allusion to the history of the place he is visiting, and shows a profound acquaintance with its needs and hopes, whilst all the time mingling with his discourses a cheery and more or less chauvinist note, which pleases the local inhabitants. M. Poincaré is a past master in the art of speaking, and turns his gift skilfully to account, both in the provinces and also in Paris, where he lays himself out with indefatigable persistence and perseverance. His inclinations in this respect are well known, and the most humble little society will invite the President to take the chair at its dinners or attend its meetings. He always accepts these invitations and fascinates everyone by his gracious manner and by his eloquence.

People are beginning to think, however, that he makes himself too cheap. And there are plenty of people who do not share his political opinions and aims and are ready to carp at his constant appeals to popularity, which they find alarming and inconvenient. They also criticise his habit of taking Mme. Poincaré with him wherever he goes, and represent such practices as likely to lead the country away from the fixed path of Republican customs, which should remain unaltered.

Wherever the President goes, whether it be in the Departments or in Paris itself, people are, as a rule, flattered by his visit, and in many of the out-of-the-way districts in France his visit is an occasion for the distribution of honours, of complimentary presentations, and of commercial or financial privileges; but it is not infrequently a dangerous pastime to speculate too much upon the gratitude of mortals.

The groups which opposed M. Poincaré's Presidency have not sheathed their swords. On the contrary, they are irritated by the effect which his personal triumphs may have upon public opinion. They are carrying on the fight on different ground, on which they, too, are scoring victories.

It is an open secret that the President felt the downfall of the Bathou Ministry keenly. He was fully alive to its significance, and quite aware that it was his own personality that was at stake. Having been deserted by several notable politicians upon whom he thought he could rely, he found himself obliged, whilst nominally appointing M. Doumergue, to place the reins of government really in M. Caillaux's hands; and this necessity has deeply mortified him. He has a profound antipathy for the personality of the Finance Minister. He is aware of his merits, but sees his weak points too. He sees in this incident a stumbling block to that military and nationalistic policy which he has been systematically pursuing from the first day of his Premiership.

Along with M. Delcassé, M. Millerand, and others, he has incessantly preached the political and military regeneration of France in combination with closer and more confidential relations to Russia. He went to St. Petersburg as Prime Minister; he will go there again a few months hence as President of the Republic.

A short while ago he sent M. Delcassé there with instructions to intensify, by every possible means, the

advantages of the Franco-Russian alliance, and to persuade the great Empire to enhance its military preparations.

It is said now that M. Delcassé was somewhat over zealous, and that his mission was hardly a success, that he was more importunate than was found agreeable in high Muscovite circles, and that however his rather premature return may be explained, it was really due to his personal failure at St. Petersburg.

Some people give other reasons besides: M. Delcassé is, as everyone knows, superlatively ambitious; he wants to climb to the top of the French official tree, and dreams of becoming Premier as a stepping stone to the Elysée (Presidency of the Republic).

He knows as well as anybody that M. Poincaré's enemies are numerous and on the alert, and that they will leave no stone unturned to make it impossible for him to remain in office and to induce him to resign. They will find their task a difficult one, for M. Poincaré is very much alive and very intelligent, and he knows with what snares he is surrounded, and will do his best to avoid them. Above all things, he clings to the high position which he has acquired, and there is little hope of seeing him content to resign of his own accord, as occurred in the case of M. Casimir Perier.<sup>3</sup> But in France everything is possible. The President's actual opponents may discover still unsuspected ways of injuring him. It is said that M. Delcassé is bent on remaining in Paris in order to lose no opportunity of gratifying his ambition. Since his return from St. Petersburg he has deliberately kept in the background, but evidently that will not go on for long.

Having been sent to Versailles by the votes of a section of the Republican party, assisted, however, by the Parliamentary Centre and Right, M. Poincaré was a sort of god to the Conservatives of the Chamber during the first few months of his tenure of office. They swore by him, and him only; they placed the most absolute reliance upon his Conservative tendencies. But the wind has already veered somewhat; he is criticised for contributing in the honours paid to the late General Picquart;<sup>4</sup> he is blamed for accepting the Ministry as at present constituted; and fault is found with him for the last outburst of anti-clericalism in Government Departments and the renewed persecution of certain religious institu-

tions. He has not satisfied the expectations built upon him; confidence in him is waning.

At the time of his election to the Presidency, many of those who claimed to know him maintained that, with the best intentions and with undoubted talent, he was yet incapable of protracted effort and sustained resistance. These persons are now pointing out that they said so from the first, thereby diminishing M. Poincaré's popularity appreciably in certain circles.

Ever since he went to the Elysée the President has been trying to make friends with his most dangerous opponent, M. Clemenceau. This attempt, as everyone knows, has not been successful. The editor of *l'Homme Libre* (M. Clemenceau) does not neglect for a single day his vehement and perfidious attacks on M. Poincaré. During his long career he has already overthrown a great many Cabinets. He now aims higher.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## VISIT OF KING GEORGE AND SIR E. GREY TO PARIS.

No. 113.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, April 24, 1914.

SIR,

Both the Press and the political world of Berlin have been of necessity absorbed in the visit of the English royalties to Paris, and nothing short of the recent events in Mexico could have diverted their attention from this subject. Everyone here agrees that certain French editors and writers have been singularly clumsy in the way they have set about trying to persuade the British Government to turn the entente cordiale into a regular Alliance, and the Berlin journalists, Liberals and Conservatives alike, have been rejoicing over their lack of success.<sup>5</sup> M. Ernest Lavisse opened fire with his letter to the *Times*, from which we see that a good historian may quite well be a very poor writer on political matters. Nothing could have been better calculated to annoy the Germans and put the English still more on their

guard than M. Lavissee's mention at the end of his letter of Alsace-Lorraine, which he calls a question that concerns Europe and the world at large. For Germans there is no such thing as an Alsace-Lorraine question, at least, in the sense in which it is used by Frenchmen, seeing that the fate of war has finally reunited those ancient Germanic provinces to the German Empire. The only question on which they disagree amongst themselves is as to the best form of administration for Alsace-Lorraine, which is not easy to govern. Some Germans advocate severity, others mildness. They are all convinced that England will never go to war to help France recover her lost provinces.

M. Cambon traces M. Isvolsky's hand once more in this futile campaign in the Russian and French papers. M. Isvolsky is again in great favour at Petersburg: witness the high distinction, the ribbon of St. Alexander Newsky, that has just been conferred upon him. At Paris, nevertheless, he has not got the ear of the Radical Cabinet. Indeed, the French Ambassador at Berlin is hoping that this intriguing diplomatist may soon be sent to represent the Tsar in London. He will there be able to convince himself that public opinion is not in favour of a formal treaty by which England would be deprived of her liberty of action and her fate bound up with the destinies of Russia and France. It is interesting to note that it is the Radical party in England which is most averse to an alliance with the French Republic. One would have thought that their extremist views would have brought them into sympathy with the French Radicals who are pursuing the same political aims on the other side of the Channel. Yet their sympathies go out rather towards Germany, in spite of her Conservative and somewhat reactionary Government. How is this anomaly to be explained? Is it that they are afraid lest France should involve them in a war which would lay England under heavy financial burdens and prevent reforms from being carried out for a long time to come? Is it that they are averse to compulsory military service? Or merely to that increase in the British army which French writers show such ill-judged zeal in urging upon them. Perhaps, too, there may be in it a trace of the old Presbyterian spirit which still survives amongst the lower classes of British society, which are composed mainly of Nonconformists? This spirit has been at all

times inimical to French ideas and French civilisation. The antipathy of the English Radical towards the neighbouring Republic is doubtless a result of all these various causes, and made up of these different factors.

For us the most interesting inquiry suggested by the visit of the British Sovereigns is whether the British Government would be as ready to-day as it was three years ago to side with France if a conflict should arise between France and Germany. We have had proof that the military authorities in both countries contemplated the co-operation of the British army and the despatch of an expeditionary force to the Continent. Would this hold good to-day, and should we still have to fear the entrance of English soldiers into Belgium to assist us to defend our neutrality after first compromising it.<sup>6</sup>

If we examine the question from the German point of view, the only one from which I can see, the answer cannot be doubtful. To an onlooker living in Berlin the links of the entente cordiale seem to be somewhat slackened, and that its edge as a weapon of defence is no longer turned exclusively towards Germany as it was in the days of King Edward. Rather it would seem that the triple entente has become less of a Union of Powers, and more of a Concert acting together on certain definite questions in pursuit of common interests. But this way of regarding it may perhaps be mistaken or influenced by reading political writings that emanate from German pens. It would interest me very much to know what my colleagues of London and Paris think of the aspect assumed by the entente cordiale.

Believe me to be, etc.,

(Signed) BEYENS.

## KING GEORGE AND SIR E. GREY IN PARIS.

No. 114.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, April 25, 1914.

SIR,

The City of Paris and the heads of the Republican Government have just given a brilliant and enthusiastic reception to the King and Queen of England. It surpasses the welcome usually given to the guests of France, but

is not equal to that accorded to the Emperor of Russia a few years ago.

A painful personal loss prevented me from being present at the festivities and parties given to celebrate the royal visit, but the echoes of them penetrated to me, and I thus know for a certainty that the three days of fortunately splendid weather which their Majesties spent in Paris proved a thorough success, and have called forth very marked expressions of goodwill. These centred round the principle of the *entente cordiale*, and were very actively nourished by the gust of nationalism, not to say chauvinism, which the nation's rulers have managed to evoke in order to persuade the people to consent to the burdensome principle of Three Years' Military Service, with all its consequences, personal, economic, and financial.

The speeches made by the heads of the two States at the dinner at the Elysée were both remarkable and highly commended. M. Poincaré in his laid greater stress than his guest on the desirability of seeing the friendly relations already existing between France and England become every day closer and more cordial in character.

The possibility of giving these relations a more formal character in the form of a treaty or convention was, of course, not alluded to. Certain newspapers had imagined some such combination, but there was never any proposal of the sort, as is unmistakably established by semi-official *communiqués* in London and Paris, which seem to be echoes of correspondence between M. Doumergue and Sir Edward Grey.<sup>7</sup> Great Britain is not fond of formal conventions, and the arrangements concluded between the two Governments, as to-day established, are quite adequate for the realisation of the ends in view, whilst leaving the liberty of the contracting parties, in certain respects, unimpaired. The Emperor Nicholas has chosen this moment to confer an eminent distinction upon the Russian Ambassador in Paris, accompanied by words full of meaning, all of which bears out the international character of the Paris demonstration in honour of King George.

The King of England's visit to France was pre-arranged, necessary, and opportune. He had not visited Paris since his accession to the throne, and owed it in courtesy as a return for that paid last year by M. Poincaré.

One may, however, question whether it is of a kind to make any perceptible alterations in the tolerably confidential relations that already existed between the two countries. During the last few months, moreover, these relations have indisputably shown signs of solidity and have helped to maintain peace all round whilst not hindering attempts at other *rapprochements* no less advantageous to the balance of Europe.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

### ANGLO-FRENCH RELATIONS AND THE GROWTH OF FRENCH CHAUVINISM.

No. 115.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, May 8, 1914.

SIR,

I had an opportunity yesterday of conversing with one of the people in Paris best acquainted with the international situation. He said to me: "The visit of the King and Queen of England has been a complete success. The festivities were graced by the presence of the sun, and Frenchmen love parading and shouting "Long live the King." Accordingly, they gave their guests a really hearty reception, but I doubt whether these demonstrations will involve the slightest change in the policy of both countries. King George's speech, by the way, was obviously much less enthusiastic than M. Poincaré's.

Of what nature are the agreements that bind the two countries? Have they concluded a military convention? I do not know, but I have not forgotten that some thoughtful and serious minds harbour doubts as to the help France would receive from England if a European conflagration came to pass. There are even people who do not believe in any very effective co-operation of Britain on the seas.

I know that people talk glibly of England's being prepared to land troops on the North coast of France, and thence despatching them promptly into the S.E. districts to cut off the advance of the Italian troops.

It is possible, but I think I am right in saying that the French authorities make light of any action by the Italian army since it would require a considerable time to mobilise. Finally, England continues to flirt with Germany. I have not been able to learn the latest developments of the Anglo-German negotiations with regard to Angola and Mozambique, but it is a point on which it would be interesting to have precise information.<sup>8</sup>

There is no doubt that the French nation has become more chauvinist and self-assured during these last few months. There are men, well informed and thoroughly versed in affairs, who, two years ago, expressed lively fears at the bare mention of possible difficulties arising between France and Germany. These same persons have now changed their tone, are proclaiming the certainty of victory, lay great stress on the improvements in the French army (which is true enough), and declare themselves sure of being able at least to hold the German army in check long enough to allow Russia to mobilise, concentrate her forces, and hurl herself upon her neighbour on her Western frontier.

I do not believe that either of the two countries wishes to cast the dice in such a horrible gamble as a war would be. Still, there is always the fear with the French temperament that some incident foolishly handled might so work upon the more nervous, let alone the more disreputable, elements of the population as to bring about a state of things in which war would become inevitable.

An experienced diplomatist occupying a high position said lately: "If one of these days some serious incident occurs between France and Germany the statesmen of both countries will have to find a peaceful solution within three days or else there will be war."

One of the most dangerous features of the actual situation is France's reversion to the Three Years' Law. It has been frivolously imposed upon the country by the military party, and is more than she can bear. In less than two years from now they will either have to abandon it or go to war. Sensible people are trying to mend matters by so modifying the law as to remove its harshest features without wounding national pride. Some compromise is being planned based on the yearly calling up of the reserves.

The tone of the Press is ugly in both countries. The campaign which is being carried on in Germany about

the Foreign Legion is exceedingly stupid, and the tone of the French papers is invariably bitter and aggressive. Many sensible people are complaining of this state of things, but there is no one with sufficient prestige and independence to try to alter it.

Nothing is to be hoped for from Parliament. The first ballot in the General Elections has already shown us that, as we expected, this next Chamber of Deputies will be pretty much the same as the last one. The Socialists may gain a few seats, but, taking it all together, the Radical-Socialist Party will keep the lead despite all its failings and blunders. Whatever view one may take of recent events, M. Caillaux, who is to-day the only financier in the Chamber, seems likely to remain the moving spirit in French policy, only a little more venomous and bitter than before.

I am etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

## RUSSIA AND THE THREE YEARS' MILITARY SERVICE LAW.

No. 116.

BARON GUILLAUME, Belgian Minister in Paris, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

PARIS, *June 9, 1914.*

SIR,

At the moment I have the honour to write to you—10 o'clock in the morning—it is hoped that the Ministerial crisis will soon be over. M. Ribot let it be known at the Elysée last night that he would undertake the task of forming the new Cabinet, and it is said that he has secured the co-operation of Messrs. Bourgeois, Delcassé, Jean Dupuy, Clémentel, and Noulens. A hitch may still occur at the last moment, but it is commonly reported that M. Ribot's preliminary overtures met with a very favourable reception.

M. Poincaré only decided, much against the grain, to apply to the Rue-de-Valois party, by offering the leadership to M. Viviani, and, therefore, of course, will be particularly pleased to find himself backed by a combination drawn from men whose talents and patriotism he

appreciates. Besides, he must know that the object of prolonging the Ministerial crisis was largely due to the desire to cause him personal embarrassment.

The Radical-Socialists and the United Socialists hate him more every day, he is the object of the vindictive personal enmity of many of the party leaders, M. Clemenceau and M. Caillaux for instance, and everything that is humanly possible will be done to make life at the Elysée unendurable for him.

What devoted personal adherents has he got on whom he can count amongst the men whom he is trying to rally round him? It is a difficult question to answer, and one must not forget that M. Deschanel, to whom he has made overtures, was his rival for the Presidency, as was also M. Ribot, and as M. Delcassé hopes to be hereafter.

During the last few days the Press campaign in favour of the general principle of the Three Years' Bill has been exceedingly violent. Every means has been tried to influence public opinion. There has even been an attempt to implicate General Joffre personally. We have even seen the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg—contrary to all precedent—take an initiative of considerable danger for the future of France.

Is it true that the St. Petersburg Cabinet forced the Three Years' Law upon this country, and is ready to-day to bring all its weight to bear in order to keep it in force?

I have failed to obtain any light upon this delicate subject. But (if true) it would be all the more serious since those who direct the Empire of the Tsar cannot but be aware that the effort thus demanded of the French nation is too great to be sustained and cannot be prolonged. Is, then, the line taken by the Government at St. Petersburg founded on the belief that events are so near that this tool, if placed in her Ally's hand, can be used?<sup>9</sup>

The composition of the Ribot Ministry will certainly arouse violent opposition from the extremist parties, who will demand an explanation of all the insinuations that have been spread abroad during these last few days with regard to the attitude of Russia, her wishes and her threats.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) GUILLAUME.

**BRITISH OPINION AND THE THREE YEARS' MILITARY LAW.**

No. 117.

COUNT DE LALAING, Belgian Minister in London, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

LONDON, *June 11, 1914.*

SIR,

I had the honour on the 8th inst. to inform you of the uneasiness aroused here by the recent Ministerial crisis in France. The formation of the Ribot Cabinet has accordingly been received with the keenest satisfaction, for people reckon that nothing but the adoption of the Three Years' Military Service can make it possible for the French Republic to keep the promises made to her Ally, Russia, or to her friend, England. It is now the turn of French patriotism, and on this they think they can rely. Party quarrels ought to yield precedence to the superior interests of the nation, and the veteran, M. Ribot, has set a fine example of unselfishness and public spirit in accepting the arduous task thrust upon him. A good omen is the presence of M. Bourgeois in the Cabinet. He is open and honest, and his Radicalism is well-tryed. His presence at the Quai d'Orsay (French Foreign Office) is obvious; and no less happy, to all appearance, is the nomination of M. Delcassé to the War Office. In short, everything indicates that there will be a majority in the Government committed to the faithful administration of the Army Act. It is, however, thought in English political circles that the Ribot Ministry will depend for its tenure of office very largely on the attitude that M. Clemenceau may adopt. He is known to be favourable to the principles of the Act in question, but it is still a secret whether he will suppress his personal grudge against the President or whether he will more or less openly support the parties which aim at discrediting the Government and rendering its task impossible. Hence some apprehensions are still felt despite M. Ribot's initial success.<sup>10</sup>

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) DE LALAING.

## FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS.

No. 118.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *June 12, 1914.*

SIR,

For ten days past the German newspapers have devoted their front page daily to leading articles on the French Cabinet crisis, which absorbs their attention and that of their readers. The Albanian question and the Mexican imbroglio have taken a back seat. As I had the honour to write you on May 14 last, the elections to the French legislature have given great satisfaction here. This satisfaction was manifested in the language of the daily Press, qualified, however, by the reflection that it could not be expected that the majority in the new Chamber would immediately abrogate the Three Years' Military Service Act. This law has, in fact, acquired extraordinary importance—undue importance I am inclined to think—in the eyes of the Germans. It is the "*Leitmotiv*," the regular refrain, whenever they are discussing French policy with regard to Germany. In their eyes it is a manifest proof of those schemes of aggression which they believe to be harboured by the rulers of France.

The resignation of the Doumergue Ministry, the hitch in the Viviani Coalition, the refusal of Messrs. Deschanel, Delcassé, and Jean Dupuy to undertake the responsibility of forming a Cabinet, had led the German Press to expect that its wish would be realised and the Three Years' Military Service abolished by a Radical-Socialist majority. But though the idea running through all the organs of German public opinion was the same, it was very differently expressed according to the political colour of the particular paper. Where the Liberal Press were frantically applauding the triumph of French Radicalism, the pan-Germanists only found matter for mockery and abuse; one may go so far as to say that most of the Conservative papers have exceeded all bounds in their comments. All, however, are agreed that the obstinate refusal of the Radical-Socialists to join any Ministry that would not promise immediately to settle the question

of the army was part of a line of campaign against the Elysée, since the Ministerial crisis, if prolonged, must have become a Presidential one.

The formation of a Cabinet with M. Ribot at its head has disappointed the hopes of the German papers. They refuse to believe that it was out of pure patriotism that this venerable Academician consented, despite his advanced years and enfeebled health, to undertake the thankless task of forming a Republican Coalition Ministry. They see in this action nothing but an act of complaisance towards M. Poincaré. As to his chances of remaining in power, they blindly follow the view taken by Jaurès and the French Radicals. The *Vossische Zeitung* however, which is better acquainted with French Parliamentary history, quotes the instances of Messrs. Méline and Barthou as a reminder that certain Cabinets that were doomed to death on the first day enjoyed greater longevity than was expected. As a matter of fact, the French Parliament has generally granted a few months' respite to even the least workable Ministerial combination—especially when following after a difficult crisis.

From the spectacle that France presents to-day it looks as though the Barthou Cabinet presumed over much on the popular feeling and on the strength of the country in appealing for the restoration of the Three Years' Service, and the Germans seem right in so thinking. The French people on this occasion have not shown that patriotic self-devotion of which they have given proof on other occasions. It has something to do, no doubt, with the spread of Socialist ideas among the lower classes of the nation.

However that may be one cannot but wonder whether the Barthou Cabinet and the President of the Republic have not acted over-hastily, whether they were not misled as to the German Government's real intentions in bringing forward its Bill to increase the size of the army last year, and whether consequently they were right in retorting, tit for tat, with the Three Years' Service Act before making quite sure that the increase in the German effectives was really intended as a weapon against France. I have reached the definite conclusion that, as Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg said in the Reichstag, the chief object of the German Law of 1913 was the fear that a Balkan federation might later on paralyse a large part of the Austrian forces. A few weeks after the introduction

of the Bill the Balkan federation had ceased to exist. But the German Government found itself then faced with another and unforeseen danger, and that was the introduction in France of a law to increase the fighting effectives of the French army following on a violent campaign in the Press and on the platform directed against Germany. As a result of this excitement in France, relations with the neighbouring Empire have become very strained, and there has sprung up in Germany a notion, either dishonestly circulated or accepted without examination by the best brains of the country, that a war is inevitable in the near future, because France ardently desires and is feverishly arming for it. At Paris the very same intentions are attributed to the German Government, some of whose members have, one must admit, sometimes made use of unfortunate expressions, as, for instance, when the Minister for War talked of a "lightning offensive" and a "surprise attack" to ensure the victory of German arms. Perhaps even to-day both nations are still only suffering under a ghastly mistake. The majority of the French people certainly do not want war; nor does Germany need this war. A few years hence it will be impossible for Germany's neighbour, France, to raise an army to match Germany's. Germany need only be patient and continue steadily and in peace to develop her commercial and financial strength, to await the results of her high birth-rate, and hers will be the preponderating influence throughout Central Europe without opposition and without a blow being struck. M. Barthou and M. Poincaré might perhaps have done better therefore to have kept cool and sought for some better way of securing peace between France and Germany than this competition in armaments and increase of effectives in which France is bound to give in first.

Another fault that might be found with the advocates of the 'Three Years' Service in France is that they always drag Russia into the discussion of this purely French question. Russia, whose political schemes remain inscrutable! Russia, which exploits the Dual Alliance to her exclusive advantage! Russia, which is also increasing her armaments to an alarming degree without being under any apprehensions from Germany!<sup>11</sup>

So far as we are concerned, there is no call for us to take sides (as unfortunately our French-speaking Press is

doing) either for or against our neighbour's maintenance of the Three Years' Service. But we may ask ourselves this question: If the Radical Party were to defeat the Republican Moderates rallied round the President, and if, as a consequence, the Three Years' Bill were dropped, would these not be very favourable events for us, seeing that they would contribute more than anything else to remove from our frontiers the danger of a war, whose consequences, whatever the issue, must be dreaded by us, and to restore Western Europe to a state of greater stability?

Believe me, etc.,

(Signed) BEYENS.

## THE MURDER OF THE ARCHDUKE FERDINAND.

No. 119.

BARON BEYENS, Belgian Minister in Berlin, to  
M. DAVIGNON, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

BERLIN, *July 2, 1914.*

SIR,

Some excitement has been created in diplomatic circles at Berlin by the news that the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador in Belgrade has been instructed to request the Serbian Government to institute an inquiry into the anarchist plots to which the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and the Duchess of Hohenberg have fallen victims, and to allow the Austro-Hungarian police to take part in the investigations. The talk which this news has called forth is increased still further by the fact that the decision to make this application to the Court of Belgrade, was taken as the result of a conference between Count Berchtold, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, General Conrad von Hötzendorff, the Chief of the Staff, and Krobatin, the Minister for War.

Of course allowance must be made for the anger aroused in Vienna by the crime, and by the confessions of the murderers as to the source of the bombs that were supplied from Belgrade, as well as by the ill-considered language of some of the papers in that capital, which have tried to justify the crime by depicting it as a just punishment for the oppression suffered by the Serbian population and the suppression of the Serbian national sentiment in Bosnia.

The Pachitch Government, having deliberately shut its eyes to the hotbed of anarchist propaganda in Belgrade, ought not to be surprised at being required to take energetic measures against the guilty persons, instead of continuing to treat them with blind tolerance.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless the request is outside the ordinary rules of law. When a State consents, at the request of a foreign government, to hunt down criminals within its borders, the investigation is confined to its own agents. Will Serbia consent to tolerate the assistance of Austro-Hungarian police agents? If she refuses, on the ground that it would be an infringement of her sovereign rights, will such a dispute arise, as—seeing the legitimate anger of the Vienna and Budapest Governments and the anti-Serbian demonstrations taking place in the various towns of the monarchy—may very easily break out into open hostilities?

Berlin thinks that Serbia could only venture to go so far, if she felt herself backed up by Russia, and that the Tsar's Government would not uphold her, seeing that her Government must share in the horror and alarm aroused by the crime of the regicides of Sarajevo.<sup>13</sup>

(Signed) BEYENS.

## EXPLANATORY FOOT-NOTES TO TEXT.

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<sup>1</sup> In Belgian eyes, M. Caillaux's presence in high office in France meant peace, and peace was the greatest of Belgian interests. No foreign statesman has been so abused in the British Press since 1911 as M. Caillaux. His latest book, "Mes Prisons" (Paris : Aux Editions de la Sirene ; Rue Pasquier), is of great interest.

<sup>2</sup> This railway arrangement was the natural sequel of the relaxed tension between the British and German Governments over the Bagdad railway enterprise.

<sup>3</sup> A former President of the Republic who resigned over the Dreyfus case.

<sup>4</sup> The French general who figured as a prominent defender of Dreyfus, and was much persecuted in consequence. With the proof of Dreyfus's innocence he regained his previous position, and eventually became for a time Minister of War. He died from a fall from horseback.

<sup>5</sup> The visit was of much greater importance than the Belgian diplomatist suspected. It completed the circle of Franco-British military and naval understandings by establishing the basis of an Anglo-Russian naval convention. For Isvolsky's account of the conference in Paris see his telegrams to Sazonov in "Pre-War Diplomacy" (*op. cit.*).

<sup>6</sup> See Note <sup>7</sup>, Part II.

<sup>7</sup> The official *communiqué*, published in the Press of April 24, read as follows :

In the course of the conversations that have been carried on between Sir E. Grey and M. Doumergue on the occasion of the visit of their Majesties the King and Queen to Paris, various questions affecting the two countries have been taken into consideration, and the identity of view of the two Ministers on all points has manifested itself. While placing on record the results of the policy pursued by the two Governments, together with the Imperial Russian Government, Sir E. Grey and M. Doumergue are completely agreed upon the necessity that the three Powers should continue their constant efforts for the maintenance of the balance of power and of peace.

*Le Temps*, commenting on the *communiqué*, remarked : "The Note says enough to make it unnecessary to insist that the entente is the triple entente, and more than ever prepared for united action."

<sup>8</sup> Anglo-German negotiations over colonial affairs were still proceeding.

<sup>9</sup> The Russian War Party was by this time spoiling for the fray. The *Birshewija Viedomosti*, of Petrograd, published an article on June 13 directly inspired by the Minister for War entitled "Russia is ready : France must be ready."

<sup>10</sup> The significance of the attitude of the *Times*, the Northcliffe Press, and the *Morning Post*, and generally of all the non-Liberal Press in the country during these months, and its obvious inspiration in supporting the Three Years' Law and attacking its attackers, can only be fully appreciated by referring to their columns.

<sup>11</sup> The Russian Press was teeming with incendiary articles. See Note <sup>9</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Paschitsch had been received in audience by the Tsar in February, and had been informed by his august host that : " For Serbia we shall do everything. . . . For Serbia we shall do all."

<sup>13</sup> This seems to have been the genuine belief of the Kaiser.

## BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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### **AFFAIRS OF WEST AFRICA.** (Heinemann.)

"There is no one who has, in recent years, done so much to explain West African problems to the British public."—SIR CHARLES DILKE.

(French edition: "Problèmes de l'Ouest Africain" (Hachette). Translated by A. Duchêne, Chief of Staff of the African Department of the French Colonial Office).

### **THE BRITISH CASE IN FRENCH CONGO.** (Heinemann.)

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### **GREAT BRITAIN AND THE CONGO.** (Smith, Elder & Co.)

"Mr. Morel's untiring industry has been by far the most important factor in awakening both public and official opinion to the monstrous iniquity which for the last eighteen years has been perpetrated with ever-increasing cynicism and effrontery in the Congo Basin."—*Times*.

### **NIGERIA: ITS PEOPLES AND ITS PROBLEMS.**

(Smith, Elder & Co.; John Murray.)

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**TEN YEARS OF SECRET DIPLOMACY.** (National Labour Press; originally published in 1912 by Smith, Elder & Co., under the title of "Morocco in Diplomacy.")

"This book should be in the hands of every member of Parliament, every journalist, whose duty it is to instruct public opinion, and every citizen who desires to form an independent judgment upon a very critical passage in the life of the English State."—*Daily News* (1912).

**TRUTH AND THE WAR.** (National Labour Press.)

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